MYTH AND SYMBOL

AN ANALYSIS OF MYTH AND SYMBOL IN PAUL TILLICH

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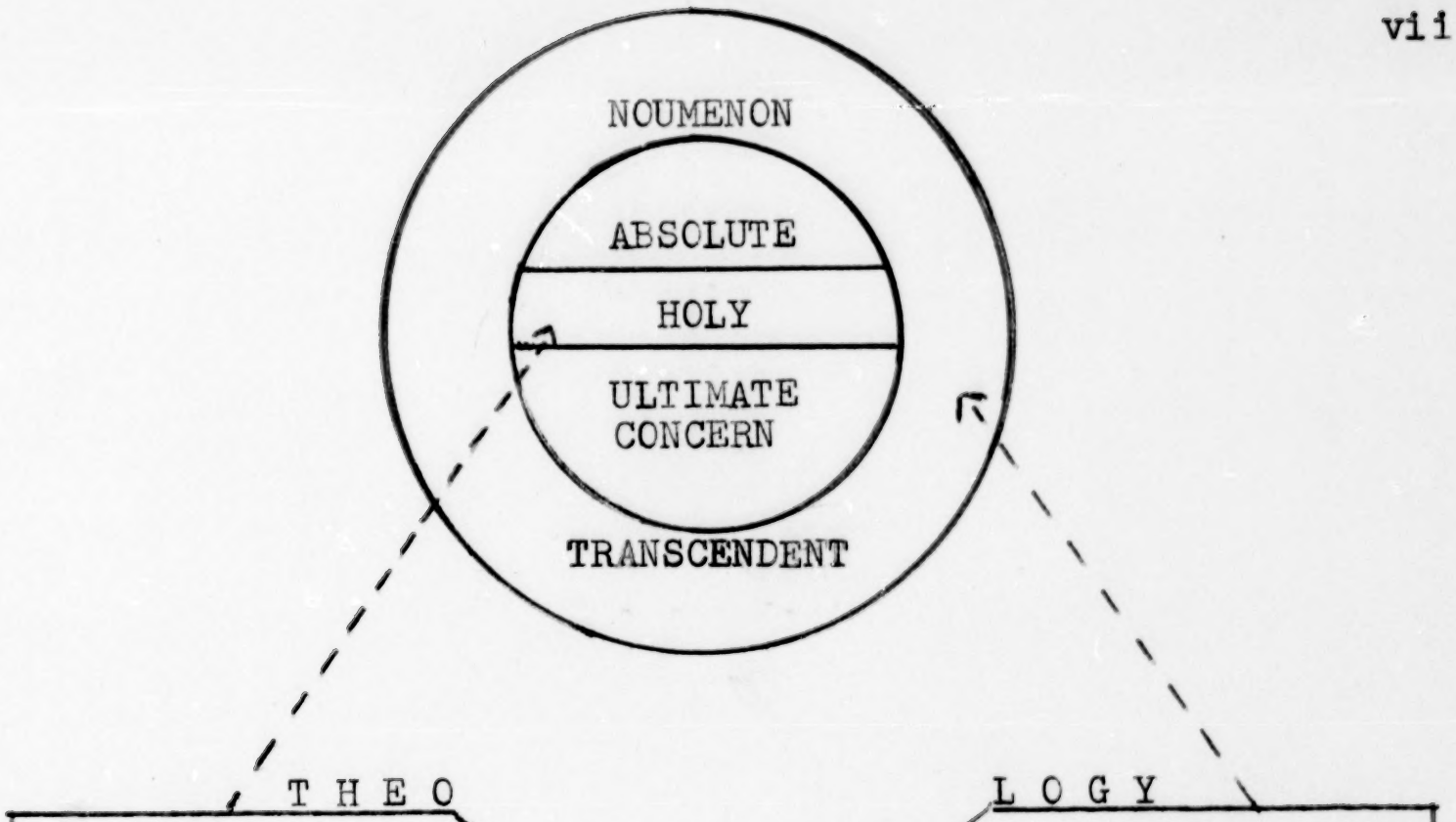
INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS OF TILLICH'S BOOKS CITED IN THIS THESIS

BR	Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality.
CB	The Courage to Be.
DF	Dynamics of Faith.
IH	The Interpretation of History.
NB	The New Being.
PE	The Protestant Era.
RS	The Religious Situation.
SF	The Shaking of the Foundations.
ST I	Systematic Theology, Volume I.
ST II	Systematic Theology, Volume II.


NOUMENON
ABSOLUTE
HOLY
ULTIMATE CONCERN
TRANSCENDENT
T H E O
L O G Y
revelation . . .
. . . philosophy
man as theologian . . .
. . . man as philosopher
mystic experience . . . = . . . sense perception
faith (doubt) . . . . . = ... scepticism
symbol = the object . . = . . phenomenon (concept) = the object

The circle represents God, ever out of reach of man's intellect, both in theology and in philosophy.

This schematization is an attempt to give a quick synthesis of Tillich's epistemological approach to God. Philosophy and theology are one science. Both are unable to reach God by means of the intellect. The two circles represent God. To the philosopher God is the noumenon whom the intellect cannot reach; to the theologian God is the holy.

He is the absolute and man's ultimate concern. Once again the human intellect does not attain God. Man's intellect works in the area of the phenomenon or, in theological language, in the area of the symbol. Here there is doubt and scepticism. This impasse leads Tillich to his theory of ecstatic reason whereby God is experienced as the holy--as man's ultimate concern. This impasse likewise leads Tillich to postulate courage as the means of overcoming the doubts that cannot be removed from the religious symbol--from the phenomenological area of religious knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

Twentieth century Protestantism has witnessed a renaissance of Protestant theology. In Europe there are Barth, Baillie, Cullman, Brunner and Bultmann; in the United States one hears of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich.

Catholic seminaries do not neglect the theological and philosophical positions of the reformers. But the same attention has not been given to present day theological positions in the world of Protestant theology. This particular dissertation is an attempt to become familiar with the Protestant theologian who occupies the most important position in America today. He is the one theologian who is a theologian of both the Old and the New Worlds. Unfortunately, he is little known in France. For many Catholic theologians, his name is but a word.

Both Protestant and Catholic theologians agree to the stature of this German-born, existentialist theologian now a citizen of the United States and professor of theology at Harvard University. Father Gustave Weigel, American Catholic specialist on Protestant theology asserts:

> This picture of 1950 Protestantism, sketched rapidly and with broad strokes, is confusing to a Catholic spectator, or, for that matter, to any spectator. Any witness of the Protestant reality, who has more than a superficial concern for the phenomenon, looks for some one to give a unified meaning to the whole thing; for in spite of its divisive appearance, it is one thing. I believe that I have found that man. It would not be an

> untenable opinion to say that the outstanding Protestant theologian of our time is Prof. Paul Tillich . . .[1]

Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, in the first volume of The Library of Living Theology, a series that began with the study of the theology of Paul Tillich, has this to say of Dr. Tillich's magnum opus, his Systematic Theology:

> This is a prodigious and impressive undertaking which must be compared with the efforts of theology which begin with Origen and run through Augustine and Aquinas. If Karl Barth is the Tertullian of our day, abjuring ontological speculation for fear that they may obscure or blunt the kerygma of the Gospel, Tillich is the Origen of our period, seeking to relate the Gospel message to the disciplines of our culture and to the whole history of culture.[2]

Dr. Tillich's articles appeared after the First World War. His early writings were concerned with either the relationship of Christianity and Socialism or with the notion of a theology of culture. The period before the First World War was what Tillich refers to as "my period of preparation."[3]

I. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PAUL TILLICH

Paul Tillich was born on August 20, 1886 in Starzeddel, a small village situated in the province of

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[1]Gustave Weigel, S. J. "Contemporaneous Protestantism and Paul Tillich," Theological Studies, 11:185,1950.

[2]At Marburg in 1925, Tillich began Systematic Theology which appeared in 1951. Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall (eds.), The Theology of Paul Tillich (Vol I of The Library of Living Theology. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952), p. 217.

[3]Ibid., p. 12.

Brandenburg, Germany.

When Paul was but four years of age, his father, a minister of the Prussian Territorial Church, was transferred to the town of Schönfliess, a small medieval walled town. Here he was the superintendent of ministers of several parishes, a position analagous to that of a Bishop.

Paul remained here until he was fourteen, at which time he left to go to the Gymnasium in Königsberg where he lodged with two elderly ladies. Summer vacations each year were spent at the seashore. The very evident romantic love of nature in Tillich is due in no small part (so Tillich himself avows) to his early days in the lovely countryside around Schönfliess and the weeks and months by the seashore. Its limitless horizon liberated his spirit.

This love of nature is evident in his mature writings and in his sermons. He often speaks of a "mystical participation" in nature, of a "sacramental aspect" of nature, that is, that God is manifest in nature. The very stones of the walled town spoke to him and gave him a sense of history in which he could see the past and the present. This sense of history he found wanting in the United States.

Tillich's mother, A Rhinelander, died when he was very young. It was his Prussian father who exerted the greater influence on the boy. From him he got his sense of sin and a certain meditativeness mixed with melancholy.

Life in a minister's home also gave him a sense of the holiness of God--a sense that later on in contact with Rudolph Otto was to be intensified. Tillich tells us that he experienced the holy in the Gothic church of his village and in his Lutheran school. He went from the experience of the holy to the idea of the holy. For this reason Schleiermacher greatly appealed to him in later years. This idealistic approach to reality characterizes the writings of Tillich.

This early period was one of strong parental authority. The whole environment, the Lutheran background and the Prussian bureaucracy were all very authoritative. It was a long while, not until the First World War, that Tillich overcame this authoritarianism. His great emphasis on what he refers to as the Protestant principle is no doubt in a large degree a reaction to his early authoritarian environment.

In 1900 the family moved to Berlin. Ever since, Tillich has preferred the large cities. The walls of the medieval town of Schönfliess were a symbol of confinement and restriction. The feeling of unrestricted space that he found each summer at the Baltic seaside, he found in Berlin. Here he continued his studies in the Gymnasium, studying the classics, Latin and Greek. Here he acquired his yearning to be a philosopher. In 1904 he passed his final examinations and then commenced his theological studies at Berlin,

Tübingen and Halle. In 1911 he received his doctorate in philosophy at Breslau and the following year his licentiate in theology at Halle. His life has been spent studying in both fields, or as he expresses it, on the borderline between theology and philosophy.

Mention has been made of his romanticism, his love for nature. In his youth he experienced difficulties in coming to terms with reality; these transported him at an early age into a life of fantasy. For some years certain imaginative worlds constituted true reality for him into which he withdrew as often as possible. This particular phase lasted from his fourteenth to his seventeenth year. This same romanticism would in later years help him to appreciate Rilke's poetry, especially his later works. Its mystical fullness and its profound psychoanalytical realism made a great appeal and still does. He turned to Rilke's poetry as to a book of devotions.

Along with his love of literature, Tillich acquired a great love of painting and this was, in part, a reaction to the horrors of the First World War. The discovery of painting, which he studied deeply, was (he tells us) an experience of decisive importance. Nature, literature and painting have influenced Paul Tillich. But the greatest influences in his thinking were the books he had read and his teachers of philosophy and theology. He acknowledges

his indebtedness to Kant and Schelling. His heart palpitated when he first read Kant, and when he read Schelling, so he says, it was in a state of intoxication. Schelling's philosophy of religion was the subject of his doctorate and his licentiate dissertations. To the present day, Paul Tillich acknowledges his dependence on Schelling. "With respect to my ontological thought generally, I want to state that it is much less influenced by existentialism than by Aristotle and Schelling."[4] In his writings he also acknowledges his indebtedness to Schleiermacher and Troeltsch, to Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Husserl, Marx and Freud. He never accepts without in some way transforming the thought he borrows from others. One finds the effects of existentialism, of phenomenology and depth psychology in his writings.

A biographical sketch would not be complete without mentioning some of the teachers that most impressed Tillich. At Halle he came under the influence of Fritz Medicus, who introduced him to Fichte. There were two professors of theology, Martin Käehler and William Lutgert, and to them he owed his insight into Luther's idea of justification. During these days at Halle he acquired a lasting love and preference for the Old Testament through the books of

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[4]Cf. Paul Tillich's remarks concerning Gustave Weigel's article "The Theological Significance of Paul Tillich," Gregorianum, 1956, 37:54.

Wellhausen and Gunkel. His attitude towards the New Testament is largely the result of Albert Schweitzer and Rudolph Bultmann. As evidence of their influence, he tells us that as early as 1911 he had asked of his confreres the question that he still asks today: would it make any difference with regard to the Christ of faith if the Jesus of history were proved never to have existed?

During the time that he worked on his doctorate in philosophy and his licentiate in theology, Tillich acted as an assistant pastor in several parishes of the Old Prussian United Church. In 1912 he was ordained a minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. During the First World War he acted as a chaplain in the army. But apart from this exercise of the ministry, Tillich's life has been spent in the classroom and the lecture hall. After the war he was Privatdozent of theology at the University of Berlin. He remained here until 1924. He taught for three semesters at the University of Marburg. It was here that Tillich began work on the first volume of Systematic Theology which finally appeared in 1951 and which added enormously to his reputation both in Europe and in America as a first-rate Protestant theologian. At the same time Heidegger was at the university. This contact with the existentialist's thought was to have a lasting effect on Tillich's approach to theology and philosophy. He rejected, however, the

atheism of Heidegger, but found Heidegger's approach of value. Then there followed brief teaching assignments at the University of Dresden, of Leipzig, and finally, the University of Frankfurt. There was no theological faculty here. Tillich gave a course that was on the boundary line between philosophy and theology.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Tillich was dismissed from the University and came to the United States at the invitation of Reinhold Niebuhr to begin a long teaching career at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. Here he preached and gave lectures.

In 1955, Dr. Nathan Pusey, president of Harvard University, invited Tillich to come to Harvard as a university professor. He was free to teach or not to teach, as a matter of fact, he has taught but two courses; both well attended.

From time to time he has returned to the Continent to give lectures--in 1948 at Marburg and Frankfurt, in 1951 at the Free University of Berlin, and in 1958 he lectured at the University of Hamburg.[5]

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[5]Cf. Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era (British edition; London: Nisbet, 1951) xxiii-xiv. Paul Tillich, The Interpretation of History, Part I, trans. N. A. Razetski (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1936) pp. 3-73. Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, op. cit., pp. 3-21. John Park Lee, "Paul Tillich at Harvard," Presbyterian Life, December 14, 1957, pp. 22-3, 35-8.

II. THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS DISSERTATION

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the meaning of symbolism in the philosophical theology of Paul Tillich. Since the language of theology is, for Tillich, identical with the symbol, a study of symbolism would lead to a complete presentation of his theological position. Such an attempt would be beyond the objective of a thesis. This need of limitation has resulted in the selection of Tillich's symbols of God and of Christ. There will be a brief examination of the symbol of Original Sin, but only insofar as it is necessary to an understanding of the Christological symbols.

The thesis will, therefore, be firstly: an analysis of the theological and Christological symbols of Paul Tillich. This position is found, chiefly, in his magnum opus, Systematic Theology, Vols. I and II; but it is also found in his many sermons and lectures and articles. There will be a consideration of the general nature of symbol in Tillich in order to arrive at an idea of its nature. Throughout the thesis there will be an attempt to search for the philosophical reasons underlying this theological position--for the theology of Tillich cannot be understood apart from his metaphysical position. Once that position has been accepted, there is, indeed, a certain inevitability connected with his position concerning the place of symbol in theology. Once

that position has been granted, one cannot speak of God except in the language of symbol. And, finally, there will be an analysis of the consequences of this position of symbolism on theology.

Just what does exclusive symbolism lead to in theology? In Tillich, symbolism leads to courage, to the exultation of the will at the expense of the intellect. In Tillich, theology rests almost exclusively on the will.

But before commencing the first chapter, it might be useful to get a brief acquaintance with a few Tillichian terms. His terminology is strange and original. Old words are given a new meaning. Tillich, himself, is aware of this.

> There is even in a well organized work such as my Systematic Theology a certain inconsistency and indefiniteness of terminology; there is the influence of different, sometimes competitive motives of thought, and there is a taking for granted of concepts and arguments which have been dealt with in other places.[6]

It is this indefiniteness and originality that has prompted the following lengthy introduction to Tillich's system.

This following section is an attempt to sharpen and clarify the Tillichian terminology necessary to an evaluation of his theological and Christological symbols. Not only the terminology, but his dialectical treatment, makes

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[6]The Theology of Paul Tillich, op. cit., p. 15.

the understanding of his theology difficult to both Protestants and Catholics. Tillich never says "yes" or "no," he says "yes" and "no."

III. TERMS OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE IN TILLICH

The terms of special importance in the general understanding of Tillich are: his concept of the method of correlation, what he means by the theological circle, the idea of ultimate concern, the nature of the Protestant principle, and the sources and norms of systematic theology.

Method of Correlation

Tillich sees the need of expressing his theology in the light of the twentieth century situation. He finds criticism of Protestant fundamentalism necessary because it fails to speak with reference to the situation. There must be a dialogue between the message and the situation. The weakness of fundamentalism is that it speaks with the concepts and the voice of the past. Truth and its expression have been frozen. They must never be identified. There are two poles of theology: the message and the situation. "The 'situation' to which theology must respond is the totality of man's creative self-interpretation in a special period."[7]

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[7]Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), I, p. 4.

The period in which we are living is best expressed in terms of existentialism. To fail to correlate theology to the situation is to miss the meaning of theology. Tillich reproaches Luther for this failure. For the kerygmatic theologian "the message must be thrown at those in the situation--thrown like a stone."[8] Tillich affirms that apologetic theology is to be "based on the kerygma as the substance and criterion of each of its statements."[9]

In all of his theological writing, Tillich attempts to use the method of correlation. Message and situation must be related. The questions implied in the situation must be correlated with the answers implied in the message. The advantage of this method is that

> it does not derive the answers from the questions as a self-defying apologetic theology does. Nor does it elaborate answers without relating them to the questions as a self-defying kerygmatic theology does. It correlates questions and answers, situation and message, human existence and divine manifestation.[10]

There are three species of correlation: first, the correlation that goes on between religious symbols and that which is symbolized (this is the central problem of religious knowledge), second, that correlation between concepts themselves, for example, those concepts denoting the human and those denoting the divine (this is the correlation of

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[8] ST I, p. 7. [9] Ibid. [10] ST I, p. 8.

the infinite and the finite), third, that correlation between man's ultimate concern and that about which he is ultimately concerned (this qualifies the divine-human relationship with human experience). Here Tillich differs with Barth. He denies that such a correlation makes man dependent on God. He makes the distinction between God's nature, which is ever transcendent and independent of man, and God's manifestation.

> God in his self-manifestation to man is dependent on the way man receives his manifestation.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The divine-human relationship is a correlation also in its cognitive side. Symbolically speaking, God answers man's questions, and under the impact of God's answers man asks them. Theology formulates the questions implied in human existence, and theology formulates the answers implied in divine self-manifestation under the guidance of the questions implied in human existence. This is a circle which drives man to a point where question and answer are not separated. This point, however, is not a moment in time. It belongs to man's essential being, to the unity of his finitude with the infinity in which he was created . . . and from which he is separated . . . . A symptom of both the essential unity and the existential separation of finite man from his infinity is his ability to ask about the infinite to which he belongs: the fact that he must ask about it indicates that he is separated from it.[11]

Only the man who has experienced the shock of transitoriness, the anxiety unto death, in a word, only the existentialist is able to find meaning in revelatipn. Revelation will always have meaning, since man will always be in a state of estrangement, of existential anguish. "Man is the question he asks about himself, before any question has been

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[11] ST I, p. 61. Infra, ch. iii.

formulated."[12]

The existentialist theologian, using the method of correlation, looks at existence, the plight of man, and then he looks at the symbols of Christian revelation passed on by the Church and tradition. He then proceeds to prove that these symbols are the answers to the questions posited by such a state. The terms, it is true, of existentialist theology are terms coined by the twentieth century, but the reality is a reality that is found both in the Old and the New Testament. When Calvin speaks of man's misery, he is but finding, according to Tillich, the existential basis for God's glory. "In the initial sentences of his theological system Calvin expresses the essence of the method of correlation."[13] The theologian in making his analysis of the human situation makes use of the findings of the sociologist, the depth psychologist, the novelist and the artist. It is by means of his philosophy that he organized all this knowledge and in all of this he is acting as a philosopher. But the correlation of this knowledge with the symbols handed him by the Christian message is his task as a theologian.[14]

The kerygma is "spoken" to him in existence. It is not derived from the anguish of finitude. And this kerygma

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[12] ST I, p. 62.

[13] ST I, p. 63.

[14] Cf. ST I, p. 63 and ST II, pp. 15 and 28.

is contained in certain revelatory events and is dependent on those events in so far as the content of the message. In so far as the form, the message is dependent on the questions which this message answers.[15]

> But it should be reaffirmed that the answers cannot be derived from the questions, that the substance of the answers--the revelatory experience--is independent of the questions. But the form of the theological answer is <u>not</u> independent of the form of the existential question. If theology gives the answer, "the Christ," to the question implied in human estrangement, it does so differently, depending on whether the reference is to the existential conflicts of Jewish legalism, to the existential despair of Greek skepticism, or to the threat of nihilism as expressed in twentieth-century literature, art, and psychology. Nevertheless, the question does not create the answer. The answer, "the Christ," cannot be created by man, but man can receive it and express it according to the way he has asked for it.[16]

This is the method of correlation. It replaces three inadequate methods: first, the "supranaturalistic, in that it takes the Christian message to be a sum of revealed truths which have fallen into the human situation like strange bodies from a strange world."[17] Here he breaks with Barth. Second, it replaces the "'naturalistic' or 'humanistic'"; here the message is deduced from the question. He rejects this vigorously. In this state there is no message at all spoken to man; man alone is the speaker. The third, is the "'dualistic,' inasmuch as it builds a supranatural

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[15]Cf. <u>ST I</u>, p. 64; also <u>ST II</u>, p. 13.

[16]<u>ST II</u>, pp. 15-6.

[17]<u>ST I</u>, p. 64.

structure on a natural substructure."[18]

He is equally vigorous in rejecting the Roman Catholic position on nature and grace--the natural and the supernatural. This point will be made clear later on in the thesis. Its rejection is capital to his system. Throughout his Systematic Theology, Tillich will employ this method of correlation. There is no field of theology in which it is not operative. Without it theology has no meaning; the very structure of the Tillichian system of theology stands or falls with this method. The theologian is obliged by this method to participate in the human predicament. Unless the theologian experiences man's finitude as his own, as though he had not received revelation's answer of eternity; unless he experiences the anxiety of guilt, as though he had never received revelation's message of forgiveness; he cannot communicate that message in a convincing way. The method of correlation protects the theologian "from the arrogant claim of having revelatory answers at his disposal."[19]

The following three citations fully illustrate Tillich's position:

> The power of the Protestant principle first became apparent to me in the classes of my theological teacher, Martin Käehler, a man who in his personality and theology combined traditions of Renaissance humanism and German classicism with a profound understanding of the Reformation and with strong elements of the religious

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[18] ST I, p. 65.

[19] ST II, p. 15.

awakening of the middle of the nineteenth century. The historians of theology count him among the "theologians of mediation"--often in a depreciating sense. But the task of theology is mediation, mediation between the eternal criterion of truth as it is manifest in the picture of Jesus as the Christ and the changing experiences of individuals and groups, their varying questions and their categories of perceiving reality. If the mediating task of theology is rejected, theology itself is rejected; for the term "theo-logy" implies, as such, a mediation, namely, between the mystery, which is theos, and the understanding, which is logos. If some biblicists, pietists, evangelicals, and lay Christians are opposed to the mediating function of theology, they deceive themselves, since, in reality, they live by the crumbs falling from the table of the theological tradition which has been created by great mediators.[20]

Theology is defined as "theonomous metaphysics," a definition that was a first and rather insufficient step toward what I now call the "method of correlation." This method tries to overcome the conflict between the naturalistic and supernaturalistic methods which imperils not only any real progress in the work of systematic theology but also any possible effect of theology on the secular world. The method of correlation shows, at every point of Christian thought, the interdependence between the ultimate questions to which philosophy (as well as pre-philosophical thinking) is driven and the answers given in the Christian message. Philosophy cannot answer ultimate or existential questions qua philosophy. If the philosopher tries to answer them (and all creative philosophers have tried to do so), he becomes a theologian. And, conversely, theology cannot answer those questions without accepting their presuppositions and implications. Question and answer determine each other; if they are separated, the traditional answers become unintelligible, and the actual questions remain unanswered. The method of correlation aims to overcome this situation. In the chapter on "Philosophy and Theology" (as well as in all my work in systematic theology) the method is explained and applied. Such a method is truly dialectical and therefore opposed to the supernaturalism of later Barthianism as well as to any other type of orthodoxy and fundamentalism. Philosophy

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[20] PE, xiii.

and theology are not separated, and they are not identical, but they are correlated, and their correlation is the methodological problem of Protestant theology.[21]

> Secular forms are open to a continuous transformation by autonomous creativity. Nothing is less Protestant than the Catholic sanctification of a special philosophy, a special art, a special ethics. This is just the way in which the Roman church tries to prevent secular culture from raising a protest against the ecclesiastical forms. But this is not the Protestant way. Protestantism considers secularism as a continuous, ever changing task for its formative power. There is no fixed, not even a classical, solution. There are preliminary affirmations, constructions, solutions; but nothing is final. The Protestant Gestalt of grace is dynamic and flexible. The "present" decides about the special task. Its problems and tensions, its trends and creations, determine the direction in which the formative power of Protestantism must work. This leads to the second principle of Protestant form-creation: <u>In every Protestant form the eternal element must be expressed in relation to a "present situation."</u>
>
> What kind of relation to the "present" is demanded in this principle of contemporaneousness? It cannot, of course, mean bondage to the moment. Not the appearance but the depth of the present is decisive. But the depth, the dynamic structure of a historical situation, cannot be understood by a detached description of as many facts as possible. It must be experienced in life and action. The depth of every present is its power to transform the past into a future. It is, therefore, a matter of venture and decision.[22]

<u>The Theological Circle</u>

Tillich's philosophical standpoint is an awareness of something that transcends the cleavage between subject and object. He calls this "'a mystical a priori.'"[23] The theologian by means of his philosophy may investigate and seem

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[21]<u>PE</u>, xxvi. [22]<u>PE</u>, p. 214. [23]<u>ST I</u>, p. 9.

even to discover this "a priori" awareness. But, in all truth, it was ever there. "This is the circle which no religious philosopher can escape."[24] The theologian combines this "mystical a priori" and the kerygma of Christianity. It is within this circle that he works. To enter the theological circle, the Christian theologian must be committed to the final and universal validity of the Christian kerygma. He is not open to the possibility of a new and a higher manifestation of religion. He is in the circle. The theologian working in this theological circle must be in the situation of faith.[25] But no one can be certain that he is in this situation.

> No one can call himself a theologian, even if he is called to be a teacher of theology. Every theologian is committed <u>and</u> alienated; he is always in faith <u>and</u> in

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[24] <u>ST I</u>, p. 9.

[25] Outside the theological circle there is no way to criticize the symbol. "The decision which belongs to the dynamic-symbolic interpretation of religious knowledge is not a decision based on activities which follow the pattern of means and ends, i. e., the technical instrumentalistic pattern which allows for the 'distance' of aloofness of a testing experiment. But it is a decision which involves surrender, venturing faith, and for which there is no criterion and experimental tests outside the situation itself. Within the situation, however, there is a criterion for every religious symbol--I have called it 'The Guardian,' namely, the unconditioned character of the unconditioned over against any symbol in which a conditioned, finite, exhaustible reality is made the expression of our ultimate concern." Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge: A Response," <u>Journal of Liberal Religion</u>, 2:204, Spring, 1941.

> doubt; he is inside and outside the theological circle.[26]

This, consequently, leaves room for doubt and uncertainty; one never can be sure. The question is, therefore, how to know where you are--to know whether you are a theologian or not. And Tillich answers: ,

> . . . a person can be a theologian as long as he acknowledges the content of the theological circle as his ultimate concern. Whether this is true does not depend on his intellectual or moral or emotional state; it does not depend on the intensity and certitude of faith; it does not depend on the power of regeneration or the grade of sanctification. Rather it depends on his being ultimately concerned with the Christian message even if he is sometimes inclined to attack and to reject it.[27]

This is an example of the dialectical nature of his theology, of its necessarily ambiguous nature and, consequently, the reason why so much emphasis is placed on the virtues of the will.

The Ultimate (Unconditional) Concern

The term "ultimate concern" is capital in Tillich's theology. The object of ultimate concern is the Christian message.[28]

> The New Creation--this is our ultimate concern; this should be our infinite passion--the infinite passion of every human being. This matters; this alone matters ultimately. In comparison with it everything else, even

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[26] ST I, p. 10. [27] ST I, p. 10. Emphasis added.

[28] Cf. ST I, p. 11.

> religion or non-religion, even Christianity or non-Christianity, matters very little--and ultimately nothing.[29]

It is this ultimate concern that makes one a theologian. It is this ultimate concern that judges whether or not a specific branch of theology is worthy of the title, theology. "The criterion of every theological discipline is whether or not it deals with the Christian message as a matter of ultimate concern."[30] Without ultimate concern a man is not religious. Even in doubt a man can be religious--in doubt he has ultimate concern--even if the doubt is about God.[31] It

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[29]Paul Tillich, The New Being (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 19.

[30]ST I, p. 28.

[31]The place of doubt in Tillich's thinking goes back to his student days under the instruction of Professor Martin Käehler. Tillich says: "The step I myself made in these years was the insight that the principle of justification through faith refers not only to the religious-ethical but also to the religious-intellectual life. Not only he who is in sin but also he who is in doubt is justified through faith. The situation of doubt, even of doubt about God, need not separate us from God. There is faith in every serious doubt, namely, the faith in the truth as such, even if the only truth we can express is our lack of truth. But if this is experienced in its depth and as an ultimate concern, the divine is present; and he who doubts in such an attitude is 'justified' in his thinking. So the paradox got hold of me that he who seriously denies God, affirms him. Without it I could not have remained a theologian. There is, I soon realized, no place beside the divine, there is no possible atheism, there is no wall between the religious and the nonreligious. The holy embraces both itself and the secular. Being religious is being unconditionally concerned, whether this concern expresses itself in secular

is the unconditional that stamps something as religious. In fact, Tillich defines religion in terms of ultimate concern. ". . . religion is ultimate concern; it is the state of being grasped by something unconditional, holy, absolute."[32]

He presents Schleiermacher's definition of religion: a "'feeling of absolute dependence.'"[33] and he interprets this "feeling" of Schleiermacher as "the immediate awareness of something unconditional . . ."[34] He traces this "feeling" to Spinoza and Schelling. He understands that this "feeling" refers " . . . not to a psychological function but to the awareness of that which transcends intellect and will, subject and object."[35] He claims that "Schleiermacher's 'feeling of absolute dependence'" is rather near to what he himself refers to as the "'ultimate concern about the ground and meaning of our being.'"[36]

Experience plays a great role for him in ultimate concern. "Experience is not the source from which the

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or (in the narrower sense) religious forms." PE, xiv-xv.

Here Tillich gives us the genesis of his theological thinking. It began in his student days. Through the years this has not changed, it has only developed, as he himself says: "The personal and theological consequences of these ideas for me were immense. Personally, they gave me at the time of their discovery, and always since then, a strong feeling of relief." PE, xv.

[32] PE, p. 59. [33] ST I, p. 41. [34] ST I, p. 41.

[35] ST I, p. 42. [36] ST I, p. 42.

contents of systematic theology are taken but the medium through which they are existentially received."[37] This means being involved, this means participating with our hearts, being involved anxiously--in fact, we cannot be involved without anxiety. We must be like Mary. And Tillich says this himself in his commentary on Luke 10:38-42, that scene in which Martha asks Jesus: "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?" And Jesus answers: "Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion which shall not be taken away from her."

> And therefore Jesus praises not Martha, but Mary. She has chosen the right thing, the one thing man needs, the only thing of ultimate concern for every man.[38]

But this ultimate concern is beyond our grasp. "If we try to grasp it, it is no longer the unconditional that we have in our hands . . ."[39]

Protestant Principle

This is one of the central themes of Tillich's theology. This makes him a Protestant. It does not identify him with any Protestant church.

> What makes Protestantism Protestant is that it transcends its own religious and confessional character, that it can not be identified wholly with any of its particular historical forms.[40]

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[37] ST I, p. 42.

[38] NB, p. 153.

[39] PE, p. 76.

[40] PE, p. 162.

Of this Tillich is certain. It is the absolute in his system.

This idea of Tillich's appeared in his earliest writings. He acknowledges that "the power of the Protestant principle first became apparent to me in the classes of my theological teacher, Martin Käehler . . ."[41]

History became the central problem of Tillich's theology and philosophy. The reason for this interest in a philosophy of history is, he says:

> because of the historical reality as I found it when I returned from the first World War: a chaotic Germany and Europe; the end of the period of the victorious bourgeoisie and of the nineteenth-century way of life; the split between the Lutheran churches and the proletariat; the gap between the transcendent message of traditional Christianity and the immanent hopes of the revolutionary movements. The situation demanded interpretation as well as action. Both were attempted by the German religious-socialist movement, which was founded immediately after the war by a group of people, including myself. The first task we faced was an analysis of the world situation on the basis of contemporary events . . . and with the help of the categories derived from the Protestant principle in its application to religion and culture.[42]

The idea of the Protestant principle is clearly related to two other concepts often used by Tillich, and in his own sense: the demonic and idolatrous.

> The Protestant principle is the restatement of the prophetic principle as an attack against a self-absolutizing and, consequently, demonically distorted church.[43]

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[41] PE, xiii. [42] PE, xvii. [43] ST I, p. 227.

This is a function of the Protestant principle: to defend the unconditional or the absolute. Tillich is aware of the danger of this principle.

> It is the dignity and the danger of Protestantism that it exposes its adherents to the insecurity of asking the question of truth for themselves and that it throws them into the freedom and responsibility of personal decisions, of the right to choose between the ways of the sceptics, and those who are orthodox, of the indifferent masses, and Him who <u>is</u> the truth that liberates. For this is the greatness of Protestantism: that it points beyond the teachings of Jesus and beyond the doctrines of the Church to the being of Him whose being is the truth.[44]

There is nothing temporal about the Protestant principle--it is eternal.[45] There is a distinction between Protestantism and the Protestant principle. Protestantism is something temporal and related to an historical period. The Protestant principle is "eternal and a permanent criterion of everything temporal."[46] Protestantism itself must be subjected to the Protestant principle. Even the Reformation stands under the Protestant protest.[47] There is danger in Protestantism--just as there is in Catholicism--of it becoming demonic, idolatrous. The Protestant era may come to an end but never the Protestant principle.

> It is not impossible that at some future time people will call the sum total of these transformations the end of the Protestant era. But the end of the Protestant era is, according to the basic distinction between the

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[44] <u>NB</u>, p. 71.

[45] Cf. <u>PE</u>, xxix.

[46] <u>PE</u>, xii.

[47] Cf. <u>PE</u>. p. 169.

> Protestant principle and Protestant reality, not the end of Protestantism. On the contrary, it may be the way in which the Protestant principle must affirm itself in the present situation. The end of the Protestant era is not the return to the Catholic era and not even, although much more so, the return to early Christianity; nor is it the step to a new form of secularism. It is something beyond all these forms, a new form of Christianity, to be expected and prepared for, but not yet to be named. Elements of it can be described but not the new structure that must and will grow; for Christianity is final only in so far as it has the power of criticizing and transforming each of its historical manifestations; and just this power is the Protestant principle.[48]

It is this principle that justifies Tillich in being critical, not only of Roman Catholicism, but of orthodox Protestant fundamentalism.[49] The Protestant principle is not conceived as something merely negative; it has a positive aspect and that is Jesus as the Christ, the New Being. And here the Protestant principle comes to an end.[50]

Protestantism is found "wherever, in the power of the New Being, the boundary-situation is preached, its 'No' and 'Yes' are proclaimed."[51]

The question of what is the authority behind the Protestant principle is treated and Tillich claims that it is faith. This faith is received by man and it creates in man "' a divine structure of reality.'"[52] Sometimes this

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[48] PE, xxii.

[49] Cf. PE, p. 226.

[50] Cf. PE, xxii.

[51] PE, p. 205.

[52] PE, p. 210.

structure is referred to as grace. This faith "means being grasped by the power of the unconditional."[53] This faith, therefore, gives man the right to protest in defense of the infinite, the eternal, the unconditional. This Protestant principle justifies and makes necessary individual decision and is the reason for its risk.

> The central principle of Protestantism is the doctrine of justification by grace alone, which means that no individual and no human group can claim a divine dignity for its moral achievements, for its sacramental power, for its sanctity, or for its doctrine. If, consciously or unconsciously, they make such a claim, Protestantism requires that they be challenged by the prophetic protest, which gives God alone absoluteness and sanctity and denies every claim of human pride. This protest against itself on the basis of an experience of God's majesty constitutes the Protestant principle. This principle holds for Lutheranism as well as for Calvinism and even for modern Protestant denominationalism. It is the principle which made the accidental name "Protestant" an essential and symbolic name. It implies that there cannot be a sacred system, ecclesiastical or political; that there cannot be a sacred heirarchy [sic] with absolute authority; and that there cannot be a truth in human minds which is divine truth in itself. Consequently, the prophetic spirit must always criticize, attack, and condemn sacred authorities, doctrines, and morals. And every genuine Protestant is called upon to bear personal responsibility for this. Each Protestant, each layman, each minister (the minister in Protestantism is a qualified layman, and nothing else), has to decide for himself whether a doctrine is true or not, whether a power is demonic or divine. Even the Bible cannot liberate him from this responsibility, for the Bible is a subject of interpretation: there is no doctrine, no prophet, no priest, no power, which has not claimed biblical sanction for itself. For the Protestant, individual decision is inescapable.[54]

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[53] PE, p. 210.

[54] PE, p. 226.

Sources and Norms of Systematic Theology

To the question: what are the sources of systematic theology? one expects a Protestant to answer: the Bible. Tillich does that and more. It is, indeed, the Bible, but the Bible is not the only source. There are additional sources, albeit, the Bible is the basic source. The other is Church history.

> . . . it is a religious as well as a scholarly necessity that the relationship of systematic theology to the ecclesiastical tradition be stated frankly and pointedly.[55]

He recognizes that, as a member of a particular denomination, the theologian is already committed to a certain interpretation of the Bible and to a certain liturgy. ". . . the denominational tradition is a decisive source for the systematic theologian . . ."[56] The circumambient culture in which the theologian works and which places existential problems for him is itself a source of theology.[57] This is, of course, very relative to the times. One must look at all the expressions of culture, look deeply, to see ultimate concern at work. This is called "'the theology of culture.'"[58] It is a "creative source for systematic theology."[59] The closer that a source of systematic theology is

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[55] ST I, p. 37.
[56] ST I, p. 38.
[57] Cf. ST I, p. 39.
[58] ST I, p. 40.
[59] ST I, p. 40.

to "the central event on which the Christian faith is based, the appearance of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ," the greater value does that source have.[60] All of the sources of systematic theology are not of equal value, therefore; nor can anyone make use of these sources. They are sources "only for one who participates in them, that is, through experience."[61]

There are the sources and there is experience. The questions arise: what is to guide experience in its use of the sources?, what yardstick will measure the truth of the relation between sources and experience? This is the problem of the critical norm of theology. Tillich rejects other norms. The norm of Catholicism which he states is the creed on its material side, and the counsels and Papal authority on the formal side, is rejected. He rejects, likewise, the Lutheran norm which on its material side is justification through faith, and on its formal side is the biblical message.[62] He says the norms of Protestant theology change because they are built on "the encounter of the church with the Christian message,"[63] and this obviously changes and it changes unconsciously. He expresses hesitation concerning the norm of his system:

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[60] ST I, p. 40.

[61] ST I, p. 40.

[62] ST I, p. 47.

[63] ST I, p. 48.

> The norm used as criterion in the present system can be stated only with reservations. In order to be a genuine norm, it must not be a private opinion of the theologian but the expression of an encounter of the church with the Christian message. Whether this is the case cannot be known at the present time.[64]

His norm will be the New Being--the New Creation--Jesus the Christ.

> The material norm of systematic theology, used in the present system and considered the most adequate to the present apologetic situation, is the "New Being in Jesus as the Christ." If this is combined with the critical principle of all theology, one can say that the material norm of systematic theology today is the New Being in Jesus as the Christ as our ultimate concern. This norm is the criterion for the use of all the sources of systematic theology.[65]

And where does this norm come from? It comes from the Bible.[66] Does he leave any room for the counsels? Do they have any normative function for Tillich? No, they have no normative function at all, they are merely sign-posts. "They offer a very serious warning and a constructive help to the theologian. But they do not determine authoritatively the direction of his work."[67]

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[64] ST I, p. 48.

[65] ST I, p. 50.

[66] Cf. ST I, pp. 51-2.

[67] ST I, p. 52.

CHAPTER I

SYMBOLS

I. THE PLACE OF SYMBOLS IN THEOLOGY

One cannot read a book or an article of Tillich's without being conscious of the importance that the religious symbol plays in his thinking. If there is a mystique to his writings, it is the mystique produced by symbolism. It is, for him, the key problem of religious knowledge. In the first volume of Systematic Theology it is claimed that "the knowledge of God cannot be described except through a semantic analysis of the symbolic word."[1] The same idea is expressed in Dynamics of Faith: ". . . symbolic language alone is able to express the ultimate."[2]

In 1928 Tillich wrote his first article on the place of the symbol in theology.[3] This is the same theory of symbol that appears in Systematic Theology. Here the symbol is compared to the sign.

> The sign is interchangeable at will. It does not arise from necessity, for it has no inner power. The symbol, however, does possess a necessary character. It can not be exchanged. It can only disappear, when

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[1] ST I, p. 122.

[2] Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, ed. Ruth Nanda Ashen, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 41.

[3] Paul Tillich, "Das Religiose Symbol," Blätter für deutsche Philosophie, I, 1928.

> through dissolution, it loses its inner power. Nor can it be merely constructed; it can only be created.[4]

The function of the theologian is seen in his relation to a reinterpreting of the Christian symbols in the light of the needs of his day. Do the Christian symbols really answer the questions of the twentieth century?[5] That is the question the theologians must ever pose. The fact that the Christian symbols taken from the Gospels have been repeated so frequently is, according to Tillich, a reason why they have lost their vitality.[6] They must be re-evaluated.[7] But mere repetition is not seen as the only motive for a reinterpretation. The times, likewise, have changed. We of the twentieth century no longer vibrate with the feelings of those who first experienced the meaningfulness of the symbol. Note here the emphasis on feeling and experience; it is capital in Tillich's system. When the times change the danger is that the symbol will no longer correlate with man's present needs. This is an example of the need of using the method of correlation, to evaluate the

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[4]Paul Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," Journal of Liberal Religion, 2:14, Summer, 1940.

[5]Cf. ST I, p. 62.

[6]Cf. IH, p. 238.

[7]Paul Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 165.

correspondence between the religious symbol and that which is symbolized.

The symbol is so important for Tillich that there is no other way of speaking theologically, save in the language of symbol.

II. THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL REASONS FOR SYMBOL

Although Tillich makes a distinction between what he calls the philosophical and theological reasons for the exclusive need and use of symbols, his reasons are, in reality, purely philosophical. He does use theological language, for example, the Fall, but this language but hides a philosophical explanation. However, an attempt will be made to divide the two according to Tillich's distinction. In all of this his epistemology cannot be overlooked. For him, philosophy is primarily an epistemological problem. He is influenced by Kant and accepts the metaphysics of Kant--man cannot know the noumenon. Influenced also by Husserl, he views reality under its phenomenological aspect. In The Interpretation of History the assertion is made that "there is no Protestant conception of knowledge."[8] Then Tillich proceeds to say that knowledge "has to be irrational and

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[8] IH, p. 135.

dynamic."[9] Now, having denied that there is a Protestant conception of knowledge, he goes on to make the surprising statement that there is a Protestant knowledge of truth. But before coming to that statement, and in order to better show its meaning, it might be useful to know that the Roman Catholics have a "medieval-Catholic conception of knowledge," which is described as "super-rational and static."[10]

Then he goes on to reject the Aristotelian-Thomistic concept of truth as something absolute and prefers, rather, what he describes as "the Protestant idea of truth . . . the concept of truth which is actually living, full of tension, disturbing reality and the spirit."[11] The importance of this application of symbolism will be only too evident.

Tillich acknowledges his indebtedness to what he calls the"'learned ignorance' of Nicolaus Cusanus," and the "'critical ignorance'" of Immanuel Kant.[12] This Kantian position is at the root of Tillich's rejection of both natural theology and the analogy of being. Tillich will attempt to do with his symbolism what Aquinas will do with his analogy of being.[13] Tillich's problem must be seen as an

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[9] IH, p. 135.

[10] IH, p. 135.

[11] IH, p. 173.

[12] ST I, p. 82.

[13] Although Tillich does speak of analogy, it is evident that for him it is identical with symbol. Cf. ST I, p. 239. "The knowledge of revelation . . . is knowledge of God, and therefore it is analogous or symbolic." ST I, p. 131.

epistemological and metaphysical problem. Symbolism will be his answer to that problem. Symbols will be an attempt to express the area beyond reason--the area that Tillich will refer to as the irrational. Revelation is, for Tillich, the knowledge of God that transcends the categories, and the language of revelation is the symbol.

Whether the philosophical presuppositions came first in Tillich, or the theological, is not clear. But the same inability of the human intellect to penetrate reality is expressed in theological language. Theologically speaking, the Fall is given as a reason for symbol; without the Fall there would have been no need for symbol. In man's fallen state, the symbol is the sole language.[14] Because of the Fall, man's intellect cannot attain God. God is impervious to concept.[15] In an article "The Religious Symbol" the same idea is repeated: "Unconditional transcendence as such is not perceptible. If it is to be perceived--and it must be so in religion--it can be done only in mythical conceptions.[16]

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[14]In this passage Tillich actually says that there should be no need for myth, but for him myth and symbol are identical, so what is said of one is applicable to the other. Cf. ST I, p. 80.

[15]Cf. Paul Tillich, "The Idea of a Personal God," Union Review, 2:9-10, November, 1940.

[16]"The Religious Symbol," p. 22. Cf. IH, p. 117.

III. THE NATURE OF SYMBOL

Having considered the philosophical and theological basis of symbols, an examination of their nature is in order. Tillich asserts that in every symbol there are two elements. There is the element of ultimateness and the element of concreteness. Philosophy and theology, both, reach the first element since both express the ultimate concern. Philosophy expresses the ultimate concern in a detached scientific way; theology expresses the ultimate concern by means of existential participation.[17] A mystical experience is therefore necessary for the believer to attain the first and more important element of symbol, the element of ultimateness. From the world about, the believer draws the concrete element and then applies that element to God, in a symbolic way. Tillich's distinction between philosophy and theology is partly based on this second element. The philosopher deals with concepts drawn from reality; the theologian deals with symbols drawn from reality.

In The Interpretation of History, symbols are said to be "indications rather than concepts."[18] What seems to matter for Tillich is not the concrete element, but the first element--the element of ultimateness--that lies

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[17] Cf. DF, p. 91.

[18] IH, p. 89.

behind, so to speak, and towards which the concrete element always points. It is the ultimateness that remains and that is important.

> The man whose ultimate concern is a sacred tree has both the ultimacy of concern and the concreteness of the tree which symbolizes his relation to the ultimate. The man who adores Apollo is ultimately concerned, but not in an abstract way. His ultimate concern is symbolized in the divine figure of Apollo. The man who glorifies Jahweh, the God of the Old Testament, has both an ultimate concern and a concrete image of what concerns him ultimately.[19]

The relationship of this theory of symbol to the notion of faith will be indicated in the section concerning the consequences of symbolism.

The a-conceptual character of faith is spoken of as early as 1926 in The Religious Situation. Tillich speaks of

> an unconscious, self-confident faith which lies at a deeper level than the apparent antithesis of the belief and unbelief, while both arise out of it and are equally rooted in it . . . This unconscious faith which is not assailed because it is the presupposition of life and is lived rather than thought of, this all-determining, final source of meaning constitutes the actual religious situation of a period.[20]

This faith corresponds with the ultimate element of the symbol.

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[19] DF, p. 46.

[20] Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, trans. H. R. Niebuhr (New York: Henry Holt, 1932), p. 40. First printed in German in 1926, Die Religiöse Lage Der Gegenwart.

We see here the stress on the ultimate element of the religious symbol which is to play such an essential role in the religious symbolism developed in Systematic Theology.[21]

Besides giving the two essential elements of every symbol, Tillich gives us certain characteristics of symbols. They are to be compared with signs. Inasmuch as they point beyond themselves, they are like signs. Symbols, however, do not have the arbitrariness of signs. A traffic light bears no essential relationship to that towards which it is pointing--there is an arbitrariness about the sign. Symbols, however, are not quite so free. His theory on the origin of symbols will make this clear. Symbols are said to participate in some way in the reality toward which they direct us. This participation, it will be seen is neither rich nor

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[21]The two-fold aspect of the symbol is clearly expressed in the 1928 article "The Religious Symbol." "Religious symbols have no basis either in the empirical order or in the cultural order of meaning. Strictly speaking, they have no basis at all. In the language of religion, they are an object of faith. They make no other claim than that they represent the intangible transcendent, which, moreover, has no need of them in order to come into existence. Upon this fact depends a peculiar characteristic of religious symbols, namely, that they have two levels. On the basic level they are representations of the unconditioned transcendent and of our relations to it, and on the other levels they are illustrations of the symbols belonging to that first level." "The Religious Symbol," p. 15.

This article acknowledges the importance of depth psychology in accounting for the selection of the religious symbols.

satisfying to the intellect. Symbols have a certain penetrating value. They are said to open up areas of reality to conceptual knowledge. Not only does the symbol unlock extra-mental reality, but Tillich claims that it opens up the riches hidden within our consciousness.[22]

It is important to the understanding of the nature of symbol, to remember that the ultimate element is found within the consciousness of the believer, and that the concrete element alone comes from the extra-mental reality.

The nature of the concrete element becomes clearer when Tillich speaks of his idea of the sacraments. Sacraments and symbols are identified: a genuine symbol is a sacrament; a sacrament is a symbol. In Tillich's opinion the question of the sacraments has, from the very beginning of Protestantism, been the most difficult of questions. As yet the question has not been resolved, and without a satisfactory answer Protestantism will not attain its full stature.[23]

Secularism has mushroomed in Protestant lands "as a result of the weakening of the sacramental power within Protestantism."[24] Any facet of reality is capable, according to Tillich, of being a symbol--of being sacramental--

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[22]Cf. ST II, p. 42.

[23]Cf. PE, p. 94.

[24]PE, p. 112.

be it a book, a person, or a rite.[25] The mystic is criticized for passing by the concrete element in the symbol (the sacramental element) and going directly to the ultimate.[26] The danger is that the mystic will prescind too much from the aspects of time and space. However, when he attacks the attempt of men to identify the concrete element of symbol (its sacramental element) with God (the ultimate element of symbol and sacrament) then the mystic is said to serve a useful function. He is, in fact, but exercising the Protestant principle, whose function is to ever assert the finite, relative and conditional aspect of the symbol.

One of the characteristics of symbol is the fact that it does not bear an arbitrary relationship to the ultimate element, and the same claim is made for the sacraments.[27] There is not, according to Tillich, (and in this the Catholic theologian agrees with him) an arbitrary relationship between the material elements, for example, the water, and the idea of the sacrament. He refuses to accept Luther's interpretation that in Baptism, water is "simply water."[28] This separation between the two elements of symbol--

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[25]Cf. ST I, p. 139.

[26]Cf. ST I, p. 140.

[27]"Sacraments originate when the intrinsic power of a natural object becomes for faith a bearer of sacramental power. Sacraments cannot be created arbitrarily; they originate only by virtue of historical fate." PE, p. 111.

[28]Cf. PE, pp. 94-6.

ultimateness and concreteness--is used by Tillich to deny the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. "The eating of a real body is . . . out of the question."[29]

The Roman Catholic position, according to Tillich, is a denial of symbol. The concrete element must never be identified with the ultimate. The doctrine of the Real Presence is viewed by Tillich as idolatry. The ultimate shines through the symbol and the sacrament. Since, in the Tillichian viewpoint, we do not have the Body of Christ, it is convenient to take the elements that nourish our body, for example, bread and wine, and use these as symbols. For it is the body that is the highest reality in nature and the most apt to manifest the Divine Spirit.[30]

A further examination of this aspect of reality will be useful to clarify both the notion of the concrete element of symbol and the notion of the sacramental, as, in reality, it is but another name for symbol. "Any object or event is sacramental in which the transcendent is perceived to be present. Sacramental objects are holy objects, laden with divine power."[31] God's sacramental presence is identified with His omnipresence; it has nothing to do with a sacred

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[29] PE, p. 96.

[30] Cf. PE, pp. 96-106.

[31] PE, p. 108.

spot, a tabernacle, a church, a Eucharistic act.[32]

Tillich is not unaware that de facto there are sacraments, and that de facto everything is not sacramental. But just as the Fall is his reason why there should be symbols, so, too, the Fall is his reason why everything is not sacramental. It can all be sacramental in principle, if not in reality. "The holy is omnipresent in so far as the ground of being is not far from any being . . ."[33] The existential conflict between the two elements of sacrament and symbol is due, therefore, to the Fall. Finally, what will be said about the relativity of the concrete element in the symbols will be applicable to the sacraments.

IV. THE ORIGIN OF SYMBOLS

The irrational is an essential constituent of Tillich's philosophy and of his theology. Symbols do not just happen, nor can they be produced at will. The question is: where do they come from? Tillich's answer is that they well-up from the collective unconsciousness of the individual believer or of the community of the faithful.[34]

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[32]Cf. ST I, p. 278.

[33]PE, p. 111. The "holy" for Tillich is the ultimate element of the sacramental and of the symbol.

[34]It is noteworthy that the same idea is expressed by another Marburg-trained professor, Ernst Cassirer, also a

As Privatdozent of theology of the University of Berlin from 1919 to 1924, Tillich lectured on the relation of religion to politics, art, philosophy and depth psychology. His interest in depth psychology, therefore, is an early one.[35]

Tillich acknowledges his indebtedness to Jung for the ideal that the unconscious is the source of symbols.[36] Tillich's background of German idealism was a receptive field for the psychotherapeutic principles of Jung.

Although Tillich does not expressly bring up the

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disciple of Schelling. ". . . it must be taken for granted that consciousness is not free but bound in its forming of the world of religion and myth." Ernst Cassirer, The Problem of Knowledge trans. William H. Woglom and Charles W. Hendel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), p. 300.

[35]Tillich's interest in depth-psychology goes back to his early years as a lecturer, but it is especially in the last ten years that the influence of depth-psychology on theological thinking has entered his writings. He himself admits this new and additional influence of depth-psychology. ". . . I have been in permanent contact with the depth-psychology movement . . . especially in the last ten years. The problem of the relation between the theological and the psychotherapeutic understanding of men has come more and more into the foreground of my interest . . ." The Theology of Paul Tillich, p. 18. This additional interest in depth-psychology is reflected in Systematic Theology.

[36]Cf. Paul Tillich, "Redemption in Cosmic and Social History," Journal of Religious Thought, 1946, 2:18-9.

In his inaugural address delivered when he took over the class of philosophy at the University of Frankfurt on the Main in June of 1929, Tillich referred to "the depth psychology of Freud, Jung, and their schools . . ." PE, p. 11. Cf. Paul Tillich, "Philosophie und Schicksal," Kantstudien, 34: 300-311, 1929.

problem of whether the whole symbol comes from the unconscious or just the ultimate element--it would seem that there is no question concerning the ultimate element. Its very ultimacy demands that it be not from within the concepts or categories of finitude, and which cannot be the basis of anything ultimate. The concrete element, he has said, comes from extra-mental reality. The question remains whether it arrives via the unconscious; it would seem that it does.

In order to apprehend the symbol, Tillich introduces us to what he calls "ecstatic reason." In the constructive work of Systematic Theology the function of reason is described in two aspects: an active and a passive aspect. It is this passive aspect that interests us at this point. The reason that is common to the natural scientist and the theologian is called technical reason--active reason. But in theology, Tillich finds an ecstatic reason--reason in a passive state. It is reason "grasped by an ultimate concern."[37] Reason is overpowered, invaded, shaken by the ultimate concern. Here, faith grasps reason; reason is invaded.[38]

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[37] ST I, p. 53. Although the term "ecstatic reason" is not employed in the article "Kairos" which appeared in 1922, the same idea is expressed with the same notion of the passivity involved. "Indeed, the consciousness of the kairos is dependent on one's being inwardly grasped by the fate and destiny of the time." PE, p. 48.

[38] In 1926 Tillich speaks of "the intuition of the Unconditioned in the symbols of the conditioned." The

There is a dialectical relationship, however, between the reason that is grasped and the contents of faith that are grasped, and this is the source of the ambiguity of dialectical theology--the reason why theology is a "'questionable' enterprise."[39] Only in the state of "dreaming innocence" are technical reason and ecstatic reason in perfect harmony.[40]

Religious Situation, p. 83. There is, therefore, at this early period the same emphasis on the mystic element in symbolism that is found in Systematic Theology.

In Religiöse Vervirkliching (Berlin: Furche, 1929) an article on realism and faith contains the same notion of ecstatic experience that characterizes the description found in Systematic Theology.

"It is as in a thunderstorm at night, when the lightning throws a blinding clarity over all things, leaving them in complete darkness the next moment. When reality is seen in this way with the eye of a self-transcending realism, it has become something new. Its ground has become visible in an 'ecstatic' experience, called 'faith.'. . . This, of course, is not an event in nature, although--as always in spiritual matters--words and pictures have to be used which are taken from the spatial sphere. But it is the whole of the personality, including its conscious center . . . which is grasped by the ultimate power that is the ground also of every personal being. We are grasped, in the experience of faith, by the unapproachably holy which is the ground of our being and breaks into our existence and which judges us and heals us. This is the 'crisis' and 'grace' at the same time." PE, p. 78.

In this same article Tillich says that the attempt of religion is "to surpass the given reality in order to approach the unconditional. The means for achieving this is rapture and ecstasy. . . . Ecstasy is the act of breaking through the fixed form of our own being. In this sense of the term we must say: Only through ecstasy can the ultimate power of being be experienced in ourselves, in things and persons, and in historical situations." PE, p. 79.

[39] DF, p. 54.

[40] Cf. post, ch. iii.

In the sermon in The New Being concerning the scene in which Magdalen anoints the feet of Jesus, Tillich speaks of Magdalen as representing "the ecstatic element in our relation to God . . ."[41] This ecstasy is a state of mind in which reason goes beyond itself; it transcends the subject-object structure. There is ecstasy only in conjunction with mystery.[42] When the ground of being grasps the mind, that experience is described as ecstasy. "Ecstasy is the form in which that which concerns us unconditionally manifests itself within the whole of our psychological conditions."[43] Religion is able to reach the unconditional--a favorite Tillichian word for God--through ecstasy. There is no way of bringing about ecstasy, we must wait. God grasps us when He wills; His grasp of us is ecstasy.[44] Now all of this is applicable to symbols without ecstatic reason.[45] The symbol

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[41] NB, p. 47.

[42] The threat of nonbeing causes an ontological shock to the human mind. Cf. St I, p. 186. This Tillich calls the negative aspect of mystery. The positive side of mystery is either the ground of being or what he calls miracles. Mystery is something beyond the subject-object relationship; something that ordinary rational knowledge does not attain. It is not the area of technical reason; it is the object of ecstatic reason. Along with miracle and ecstasy, mystery is one of the marks of revelation. Cf. ST I, p. 127.

[43] ST I, p. 113.

[44] Cf. PE, p. 80.

[45] Allan D. Galloway expresses the same notion of ecstatic knowledge. "Like all recognition of the divine work of Christ, it is an act of faith in the strict sense of ecstatic knowledge. It cannot ultimately be expressed in

has no meaning. And it goes without saying, that since symbol and sacrament are identical, the sacrament is not revelatory of the ground of being except through ecstasy.[46]

V. SYMBOL AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO MYTH

Although there are Protestant theologians who do make a distinction between myth and symbol, Tillich is not of their number. He identifies them. Therefore, whatever Tillich has to say about myth is, by reason of its identity with symbol, of value in deepening our knowledge of Tillichian symbolism. It is this identity of the two, myth and symbol, that justifies what otherwise might appear to be a digression from the analysis of symbolism.[47]

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objective propositions, but can only be shared in the active response of faith," Allan D. Galloway, The Cosmic Christ (London: Nisbet & Co., 1951), p. 239.

Frequently Tillich speaks approvingly of the position of Berdyaev: "Being determines consciousness from the innermost depths and not from without."; "The reality of the spiritual world cannot originate from without, for it comes only as the result of deep spiritual life within." A new faculty of knowledge is postulated: "The faculty of intuitive contemplation constitutes a new organ non-existent in the average consciousness . . ." N. Berdyaev, Freedom and the Spirit, trans. Geoffrey Bles (London: Centenary Press, 1935), pp. 101-2.

[46]Cf. ST I, p. 139.

[47]It is not possible to determine how much influence Berdyaev had on Tillich, but the fact is that Tillich frequently quotes him. Their views on myth and symbol are indentical;

The world of the myth is said to be the world where man's ultimate concern is symbolized. The same philosophical basis that Tillich gives for the need of symbol, he asserts for myth. "Unconditional transcendence as such is not perceptible. If it is to be perceived--and it must be so in religion--it can be done only in mythical conceptions."[48] The same weakness of the intellect is given as the cause for the exclusive use of myth and symbol.

Just as the symbols may come and go, so, too, the myths come and go. There is in them, however, as in the symbols, a permanent element--the ultimateness of concern. "Myths are symbols of faith . . . Myths are always present in every act of faith, because the language of faith is the symbol."[49] Just as symbol cannot be removed from theology, so, too, myth is a necessary constituent of theology. Just as symbols can be replaced, so, too, can myths be replaced. "One can replace one myth by another, but one cannot remove the myth from man's spiritual life. For the myth is the

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"myth is always concrete and expresses life better than abstract thought can do; its nature is bound up with that of symbol. Myth is the concrete recital of events and original phenomena of the spiritual life symbolized in the natural world, which has engraved itself on the language, memory, and creative energy of the people." Berdyaev, op. cit., p. 70.

[48] Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 22.

[49] DF, p. 49.

combination of symbols of our ultimate concern."[50] ". . . there is no way of speaking about God except in mythological terms . . ."[51] The same reason is given for the existence of myth as for the existence of symbol, namely, the Fall.[52]

> The depth of reason is essentially manifest in reason. But it is hidden in reason under the conditions of existence. Because of these conditions reason in existence expresses itself in myth and cult as well as in its proper functions. There should be neither myth nor cult. They contradict essential reason; they betray by their very existence the "fallen" state of a reason which has lost immediate unity with its own depth. It has become "superficial," cutting itself off from its ground and abyss.[53]

Tillich makes a distinction between two types of myth. There is a natural myth and an historical myth. Natural myth sees the ultimate meaning of existence shining through, for example, the seasons of the year. Historical myth, for example, looks at the earth as the battleground of two forces--good and evil--as was conceived in Persia by Manes. Or "if the Christ--a transcendent, divine being--appears in the

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[50] DF, p. 50. [51] ST I, p. 223. Cf. PE, p. 119.

[52] Just as the symbol has its origin in the unconscious, so, too, does the myth. Protestant theologians, for instance, Wilbur M. Urban, agree with Tillich on this point. "Even the most spiritual symbols of the most moralized religions have their source in the womb of the unconscious out of which the myth and its symbols have been born." Wilbur M. Urban, Humanity and Deity (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1951), p. 89. ". . . myth wells up spontaneously within the mind according to the same involuntary process." Alan W. Watts, Myth and Ritual in Christianity (New York: Vanguard Press, 1953), pp. 68-9.

[53] ST I, p. 80.

fullness of time, lives, dies and is resurrected, this is an historical myth."[54] The Christian symbol and the Christian myth are, for Tillich, superior to the natural symbol and myth. It is necessary to remember that a myth is a symbol, and a symbol is a myth. This realization will emphasize the thoroughgoing application of symbol in Tillich.[55]

In his article "The Religious Symbol," Tillich says that "the category of the mythical, therefore, includes essentially that of the symbolic."[56]

VI. THE DIALECTICAL NATURE OF THE SYMBOL[57]

Tillich insists that symbols (and it goes without saying, myths, also) should not be taken literally.[58] In speaking about the language of theology, Tillich asserts

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[54] DF, p. 54.

[55] "The Last Judgment is the symbol for this ultimate decision that is the transcendent meaning of every empirical decision. . . . The mythological form of this idea cannot be maintained, because the concept of the ultimate and the concept of condemnation contradict each other: the first implies fulfillment of meaning, the second, negation of meaning." IH, p. 283.

[56] Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 26.

[57] Cf. ST I, pp. 56, 100, 234.

[58] "The essential character of the symbol is that it contains both truth and fiction. If it were wholly fiction it would not be a symbol for it would stand for nothing. If it were wholly true it would not be a symbol but a literal representation." Urban, op. cit., p. 117.

that the theologian "must reject the attempt to take these symbols literally."[59] That theology is dangerous, he says, that takes symbols literally, "because it makes the infinite finite, the eternal temporal . . . Where the myth is taken literally, God is less than the ultimate, he is less than the subject of ultimate concern . . ."[60]

Professor Tillich judges religion on the basis of its myth and symbols. There is, what he calls, the "broken myth" (the broken symbol). "A myth which is understood as a myth, but not removed or replaced, can be called a 'broken myth.'"[61] His interpretation of Christianity, is as a "broken myth." The Roman Catholic position is, for Tillich, an example of the unbroken myth. The unbroken myth (or symbol) is one that is accepted not as a myth, a symbol, but taken literally. Christianity, according to Tillich, "denies by its very nature any unbroken myth, because its presupposition is the first commandment: the affirmation of the ultimate as ultimate and the rejection of any kind of idolatry."[62] The Protestant principle is Tillich's expression of the first commandment.

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[59]Tillich, "Where do we go from here in Theology?", Religion in Life, Winter, 55-56, 25:21.

[60]Ibid., p. 21.

[61]DF, p. 50.

[62]DF, pp. 50-51.

Once Tillich has rejected any literal predication of theological symbols, he is forced into another position. This position, often called the dialectical position, he borrows from Hegel. Truth is discovered "through a process of preliminary affirmations, consequent negations, and final affirmations. It is made through 'yes and no' or dialectically."[63] This law of thinking is not simply a law of thinking; it is, likewise, a description of the nature of reality itself. It is a law of being. The philosophers of life, Schelling and Fichte, show their influence here. "The dialectical method attempts to mirror the movement of reality."[64]

The existentialist tension which Tillich finds within himself and in the visible world around him is predicated of being itself.[65]

> Dialectics also knows no objects whose essence is fixed, but only functional relationships in which the meaning of every element changes according to the moment of development. In dialectics, being is realized

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[63] ST I, p. 101.

[64] ST I, p. 234.

[65] It is interesting to find this dialectical method applied to the sacraments by another Protestant theologian. Remember, that for Tillich, symbols, sacraments and myths are one. Speaking of the sacraments: their "forms may change from age to age according to the changing patterns of society. This need not cause alarm, however, for the very structure of human life seems to necessitate a symbolism both of continuing organic existence and of critical dialectical inter-relationships." F. W. Dillistone, Christianity and Symbolism (London: Collins, 1955), p. 299.

in social tensions.[66]

This "yes" and "no",this dialectical method, is the reason why Tillichian theology is ambiguous--the reason why all symbols are ambiguous. The very nature of truth is ambiguous. In giving an exegesis of Jeremias 23:21,31 and 37:17, "Is There any Word from the Lord?", Tillich asserts the ambiguous nature of truth and the word of God and of authority.

> We should not be misled by the phrase, "word from the Lord." It sounds as if we turned to a heavenly authority after all others, including the authority of reason, have failed. It sounds as if we asked the Lord of providence to give us for a moment a glimpse into what He plans for us, individually and in history. But such a favor is not granted. The answers given by seers, ecstatics, books and inner voices are mostly ambiguous, open to different interpretations, so that we would have to ask for a second Divine word to interpret the first, and so on indefinitely. Or, these answers are clear and agree with the best wisdom we can have without them.[67]

Man's state of existential estrangement is described as "man's ambiguous situation."[68] And the very nature of his theology is "like all enterprises of the human mind . . . ambiguous."[69]

This is the reason, likewise, why Professor Tillich is classed among the theologians of crises.

> Everything conditioned is judged by the unconditional in terms of "Yes" and "No." There is a permanent crisis

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[66] IH, p. 182.

[67] NB, p. 116. Emphasis added.

[68] PE, p. 111.

[69] ST II, p. 16.

> going on in history, a crisis in the double sense of the Greek word: judgment and separation. No moment of history is without tension, the tension between the unconditional and the conditional. The crisis is permanent.[70]

The tension is within the very nature of the symbol. It is a tension between the ultimate element, which is the unconditional, and the concrete element, which is the conditional. The essential of the theology of crisis seems to be its insistence on the otherness--the transcendence of God. No finite reality can claim absolute authority.

The Relationship of Faith and Doubt

Tillich's attitude towards the relationship of doubt to faith is the result of his dialectical position. There is ever the movement between the "yes" and the "no," between doubt and faith. "Every theologian is committed and alienated; he is always in faith and in doubt; he is inside and outside the theological circle."[71] This doubt is never about the first element of the symbol of faith--the element of ultimateness. The doubt is limited to the concrete element of the symbol.

In Dynamics of Faith, Tillich tells us how to judge of the truth of the symbol of faith. Since, according to Calvin, "the human mind . . . is a continuously working factory of idols," there must be, therefore, an element of a self-negation in every symbol.[72] This element "does not

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[70] PE, p. 38. [71] ST I, p. 10. [72] DF, p. 97.

accept any truth of faith as ultimate except the one that no man possesses it."[73] And in his book The New Being, he speaks about the demonic danger of symbols--the danger that Calvin aimed at avoiding in his warning. "There is not freedom, but demonic bondage where one's own truth is called the ultimate truth."[74]

The dialectical nature of symbol is, therefore, the reason why Tillichian faith does not exclude doubt or uncertainty, but the "yes" of faith takes the "no" of doubt into itself.[75] "Faith embraces itself and the doubt about itself."[76] For Tillich, this doubt is not something tolerated in the symbol; it is something necessary. The doubt is not the doubt of Descartes, it is not that of the sceptic; it is an "existential" doubt.[77]

All religious symbols have in them a certain element of insecurity. It is faith that embraces this insecurity. This doubt, although it is said to always exist, may not always be experienced. It may be in the subconscious, but when it comes to the surface it does not deny faith. "Existential doubt and faith are poles of the same reality. . ."[78]

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[73] DF, p. 98. [74] NB, p. 68

[75] Cf. ST II, p. 85. Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), pp. 51-4.

[76] BR, p. 61. [77] DF, p. 20. [78] DF, p. 22.

This element of doubt is so essential to the nature of symbols that Tillich says that creeds, which are but a collection of symbols, must never exclude the presence of doubt.[79]

The Roman Catholic concept of infallibility is found by Tillich to be intolerable because it excludes this element of doubt from the area of religious symbols. Tillichian faith, because of the dialectical nature of its symbols, is said to be dynamic, living. It is said to grow on doubt. The Catholic faith (because of the literal or absolute character of its symbols) is said by Tillich to be static. Not only is the Catholic faith static, but it is idolatrous. Symbols, to find a place in Tillich's theology, must include the elements of doubt and uncertainty or otherwise they, too, are idolatrous.[80] "The only infallible truth of faith, the one in which the ultimate itself is unconditionally manifest, is that any truth of faith stands under a yes-or-no judgment."[81]

The Relationship to Tolerance

Not only is the dialectical nature of the symbol the reason for including doubt into faith, it is the justification and the motive for Tillichian tolerance. Once again the twofold element of every symbol must be kept in mind. Because of the concrete element--the element drawn from

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[79] DF, p. 28. [80] Cf. DF, p. 29. [81] DF, p. 98.

extra-mental reality--we have seen how the symbol is relative; how, too, it is open to doubt. Now we find once again this element brought forth as the reason for tolerance.

Tillich as professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York was faced with a strange situation. There in his class he found theological students of different religious creeds and symbols. They were all one as far as the really important part of every symbol was concerned--the ultimate element. Since there could be no certitude about the concrete element and relative element, then they should be tolerant of one another's positions. The only exception to the law of tolerance is the Roman Catholic position, because it alone is said to claim for the concrete element of its symbol an absolute value. The rational, the conceptual, can never be the basis of certitude. Certitude comes from the ultimate, from the experienced, the irrational.

The importance of the ultimate concern is seen in this position. Because of the ultimate element of the symbol, Protestants of different creeds, of different symbols, are one in that they each have an ultimate concern. That ultimate concern may shine through various different symbols. This makes tolerance necessary. Each of them admits that there is an element of doubt and uncertainty in the concrete element of his own symbol. This is, it must be

be emphasized, the area where doubt enters, not into the first element. That is a matter of mystic experience, and it is beyond doubt.

> Faith must unite the tolerance based on its relativity with the certainty based on the ultimacy of its concern. In all types of faith this problem is alive, but especially in the Protestant form of Christianity. From the power of self-criticism, and from the courage to face one's own relativity, comes the greatness and danger of the Protestant faith.[82]

VII. FURTHER CONSEQUENCES OF SYMBOLISM

The Relativity of Symbolism

There are additional consequences of symbolism to be considered. There is the relative character of symbols. This is one of the consequences of dialectical epistemology and dialectical metaphysics.[83] This relative and conditional character of the symbols is evident in Tillich's attitude, not only toward tolerance and doubt, but toward conversion. He expresses this in Dynamics of Faith. For him, religion should remain "aware of the conditional and non-ultimate character of its own symbols."[84] The only reason, therefore, for changing symbols, or for trying to convert anyone, is the ability of one's symbol to better express "the ultimacy of ultimate concern."[85]

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[82] DF, p. 57.

[83] Cf. DF, p. 125.

[84] DF, p. 125.

[85] DF, p. 124.

It seems more and more evident, that what is truly important in symbols, is never the concrete element, but solely the first element--the ultimate element. The concrete element is unimportant; it is relative. That relativity is further emphasized by the fact that the symbols which "grow and are not made"[86] can likewise die, and some as a matter of fact, have died.[87]

As an example of symbols that have lost their power for the Protestant community, Tillich gives the Virgin Mary. Apollo, it is said, has likewise died as a symbol for Christians.[88] The concrete element of symbol does not have the same revelatory value for each generation. The problem naturally arises, how does one determine the death of a symbol? How is one to know that the concrete element is to be discarded? It is never suggested that there is any question of the ultimate element of the symbol. Tillich answers that when a community rejects a symbol, by eliminating it from cult, or liturgy, or preaching, then it is dead. It is not the task of the theologian to sit in judgment.

> This judgment occurs in the consciousness of the living church and has deep roots in the collective unconscious. It happens in the liturgical realm, in personal devotion, in preaching and in teaching, in the activities of the church toward the world, and in the

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[86] IH, p. 239.

[87] Cf. ST II, p. 165.

[88] Cf. ST I, p. 128.

quiet contemplation of its members.[89]

The theologian has, however, the task of reinterpreting the symbol and of adjusting its meaning to the existential needs of the day. This is what Professor Tillich is attempting in his Systematic Theology. Symbols die when they lose their "'adequacy' of expression."[90] Tillich claims that this loss of adequacy occurs when the concrete element of symbol no longer has

> the power of expressing an ultimate concern in such a way that it creates reply, action, communication. Symbols which are able to do this are alive. But the life of symbols is limited. The relation of man to the ultimate undergoes changes. Contents of ultimate concern vanish or are replaced by others. A divine figure ceases to create reply, it ceases to be a common symbol and loses its power to move for action. Symbols which for a certain period, or in a certain place, expressed truth of faith for a certain group now only remind of the faith of the past. They have lost their truth, and it is an open question whether dead symbols can be revived. Probably not for those to whom they have died![91]

The Invulnerability of the Symbol

For Tillich, symbols can be born and they can die, but they cannot be attacked. Symbols are invulnerable. This, too, is a consequence of the existentialist coloring of his dialectics, or perhaps, it might help to say that the imperviousness of symbols to attack is due to their subjective character. They are experienced within the consciousness;

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[89] ST II, p. 165. [90] DF, p. 96. [91] DF, p. 96.

the scientist, therefore, cannot destroy them. The application of this will be explained in detail, when speaking of historical criticism in relationship to the Christological symbols. But the point to be made here is that this statement but highlights the real necessity in Tillich to have two elements in his symbols. The invulnerability of symbols to attack from outside the theological circle, that is, by the scientist or the historical critic, is due to the very nature of Tillich's symbol. It will be remembered that the concrete element came from outside, but the ultimate element is found within the consciousness of the believer.[92] However, were both elements of the symbol taken from the outside, then Tillich could not claim the invulnerability for his symbols from the attack of the unbeliever.

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[92]Cf. ST II, pp. 9-10.

CHAPTER II

THEOLOGICAL SYMBOLS

I. THE FUNCTION OF NATURAL THEOLOGY

The question of the possibility of natural theology brings up the question of the relationship between reason and revelation, and the existence of the natural and the supernatural. This question of natural theology is, according to Tillich, the most discussed problem in present day German theology.[1] The connection of natural theology to the theological symbols is the relation between knowledge and the object of knowledge. The theological symbols are the objects of Tillichian knowledge. But before we examine them in detail it will be necessary to consider Tillich's epistemological approach to the existence of God, indicating both the philosophical and theological presuppositions involved. There is no doubt of Tillich's epistemology. Once this epistemology is made clear in relationship to the function of natural theology then the need of ecstatic reason and revelation will become more intelligible.

The Limited Value of Natural Theology

Tillich agrees with Barth that natural theology is

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[1]Cf. P. Tillich, "Natural and Revealed Religion," Christendom, 1:159-170, Autumn, 1935.

incapable of giving us real answers, but he disagrees with the Swiss theologian as to the complete uselessness of natural theology.[2] For Tillich it has a limited value. First, natural theology makes man aware of his finitude; and second, it prepares man for revelation. It is especially this second limited value of natural theology that justifies the distinction between Barthian theology and Tillichian theology, or to use the expression of Tillich, between his own apologetic theology and the kerygmatic theology of Barth.

The first value of natural theology, its aptness to make man aware of his finitude, brings out clearly the existentialist element in Tillich.[3] "God is the answer to the question implied in human finitude. This answer cannot be derived from the analysis of existence."[4] The arguments,

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[2]"By his mighty proclamation of the Christian paradox Barth has saved theology from forgetting the deity of God and has saved the church from lapsing into secularism and paganism. This positive value is more important than all the objections that may be urged against Barth. But there is this defect: although he has been called a dialectic theologian, he does not think dialectically, but supernaturally." Paul Tillich, "What is Wrong with Dialectical Theology?", Journal of Religion, 15:127-45, April, 1935, p. 145.

[3]Tillich, however, does not admit that existentialism can give the answer. "Existentialism is a matter of questions, not of answers. It raises the question of man's estrangement and possible reconciliation. But its positive answers are not existentialist." Tillich, "Where Do We Go From Here in Theology?", Religion in Life, 25:19-21, Winter, 1955-56, p. 20.

[4]ST I, p. 64.

for example, the quinquae viae of St. Thomas commented on by Tillich, are said to have their validity in so far "as they analyze human finitude and the question involved in it. They are false in so far as they derive an answer from the form of the question."[5] The reason that the question ever arises is that the very "character of existence is that man asks the question of his finitude without receiving an answer."[6]

The following passages emphasize the function of natural theology in making man aware of his finitude, and thus preparing him for revelation.

> Reason, according to the theological view, not only is finite and therefore unable to grasp the infinite but is also estranged from its essential goodness. Reason stands, like everything in man, under the bondage of estrangement. There is no part of man that is excepted from the universal destiny of sin. For the cognitive function of man's spiritual life this means that reason is blinded and has become unable to recognize God. The eyes of reason must be opened by the revelatory presence of the divine Spirit in the human spirit. Only when this happens can truth be received by human reason.[7]

> Natural knowledge about self and world cannot lead to the revelation of the ground of being. It can lead to the question of the ground of being, and that is what so-called natural theology can do and must do. But this question is asked neither by natural revelation nor by natural theology. It is the question of reason about its own ground and abyss. It is asked by reason, but reason cannot answer it. Revelation can answer it. And this answer is based neither on a so-called natural revelation nor on a so-called natural theology. It is based on real revelation, on ecstasy and sign-events. Natural theology and, even more definitely, natural revelation are misnomers for the negative side of the revelation of the

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[5] ST I, p. 65. [6] ST I, p. 252. [7] BR, p. 64.

> mystery, for an interpretation of the shock and stigma of nonbeing.[8]

Revelation, the word of God, is not just thrown into the situation. Man is prepared for that revelation by the question that natural theology poses, although it cannot answer it.

> The arguments for the existence of God neither are arguments nor are they proof of the existence of God. They are expressions of the <u>question</u> of God which is implied in human finitude. This question is their truth; every answer they give is untrue. This is the sense in which theology must deal with these arguments, which are the solid body of any natural theology. It must deprive them of their argumentative character, and it must eliminate the combination of the words "existence" and "God." If this is accomplished, natural theology becomes the elaboration of the question of God; it ceases to be the answer to this question. The following interpretations are to be understood in this sense. The arguments for the existence of God analyze the human situation in such a way that the question of God appears possible and necessary.[9]

These questions have a very real prefatory function in theology. Without them, revelation would not have meaning. "Revelation is an answer which is understandable only if there has been a question. Answers without preceding questions are meaningless."[10] The limitations of natural theology are one here with the limitations of existential philosophy.

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[8]<u>ST I</u>, pp. 119-120.

[9]<u>ST I</u>, pp. 205-6.

[10]Tillich, "Natural and Revealed Religion," p. 169.

> . . . this is a philosophy which at the same time is theology; both are identical in a doctrine of man's finiteness in which man's existence is explained as the existential question to which revelation is the existential answer. The explanation of the question never is possible without the light coming from the answer.[11]

One determining factor in Tillich's limitation of natural theology to simply placing the question, but never obtaining the answer, is his great desire to save and defend the transcendence of God. God cannot be transcendent if man can reach Him; the initiative must ever come from God. The answer, therefore, comes from God through revelation and never through technical reason.

> We cannot bridge the gap between God and ourselves even through the most intensive and frequent prayers; the gap between God and ourselves can be bridged only by God.[12]

This same idea is expressed in Tillich's objection to speaking of God as an object of knowledge. "God cannot become an object of knowledge . . ."[13] Such attitudes are

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[11]Tillich, "Natural and Revealed Religion," p. 170.

[12]NB, p. 137.

[13]ST I, p. 271. The reluctance to treat God as an object of knowledge so frequently mentioned in Dr. Tillich's recent writings finds an expression in a lecture published in 1929. This expression is less detailed and developed than what appears in Systematic Theology, but it is not substantially different. ". . . it is not the task of Protestant theology to continue discussing the nature and attributes of God, enriching or restricting the traditional statements, but rather it is its task to contemplate the real in such a way that its divine ground becomes transparent in it

said to contradict the divine transcendence; to bring God into the subject-object structure of being is to cease to make God the ground of being. "If there is a knowledge of God, it is God who knows himself through man. God remains the subject, even if he becomes a logical object."[14] This point occurs frequently in Tillich. God precedes the subject-object structure. His insistence on this position Brings out the existential nature of systematic theology and the need of ecstatic reason and revelation.

> If the word "existential" points to a participation which transcends both subjectivity and objectivity, then man's relation to the gods is rightly called "existential." Man cannot speak of the gods in detachment.[15]

Tillich criticizes concepts such as God's omnipresence and His omniscience, for they

> transform an overwhelming religious experience into an abstract, philosophical statement . . . In making God an object besides other objects, the existence and nature of which are matters of argument, theology supports the escape to atheism.[16]

Behind this refusal to admit that God is an object of knowledge is seen Tillich's constant desire to defend God's transcendence.

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and through it. The profoundest demand of all is that we learn to speak of God in such a way that he appears not as an object above all other objects, nor as a mere symbol, but as the really real in everything that claims reality." PE, pp. 217-18.

[14] ST I, p. 172.

[15] ST I, p. 214.

[16] SF, p. 45.

> If you start with the question whether God does or does not exist you can never reach him . . . A God about whose existence or nonexistence you can argue is a thing beside others within the universe of existing things.[17]

The philosophical basis for this denial of natural theology is the Kantian limitation of reason. In a sermon entitled "Witness of the Spirit," Tillich says: "No argument of reason can give certainty. The finite cannot argue for the infinite; it cannot reach God and it can never reach its own eternity."[18] The denial of the universal validity of the principal of causality is likewise another Kantian assumption accepted by Tillich. When examining Aquinas' proofs for the existence of God, Tillich sees in each proof the place that the principle of causality plays. "The categories of experience are categories of finitude."[19]

The theological basis for this denial of natural theology is the Lutheran theology of the Fall. Because of the Fall, technical reason is said to be cut off from God. Now only ecstatic reason and revelation suffice to accomplish what was once possible for man in the state of "dreaming innocence."[20] The following passage is a convenient

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[17]Paul Tillich, "Religion," Perspectives USA, 15:43-8, 1956, p. 44.

[18]SF, p. 137.

[19]ST I, p. 82.

[20]Cf. post, ch. iii, p. 127.

bridge between the limitation of technical reason and the need of ecstatic reason:

> . . . theology cannot accept the support of technical reason in "reasoning" the existence of a God. Such a God would belong to the means-ends relationship. He would be less than God. On the other hand, theology is not perturbed by the attack on the Christian message made by technical reason, for these attacks do not reach the level on which religion stands. They may destroy superstitions, but they do not even touch faith. Theology is (or should be) grateful for the critical function of the type of technical reason which shows that there is no such "thing" as a God within the context of means-ends relationships. Religious objects, seen in terms of the universe of discourse constituted by technical reason, are objects of superstition subject to destructive criticism. Wherever technical reason dominates, religion is superstition and is either foolishly supported by reason or rightly removed by it.[21]

The Need of Ecstatic Reason

"A philosophy of religion which does not begin with something unconditional never reaches God."[22] This is the question for Tillich: where is one to find the unconditional? We have seen that in rejecting the argumentative value of natural theology, Tillich has denied that the unconditional is to be found outside of his own mind, therefore, he turns within and there he finds God in a mystical experience. He cites Augustine, Anselm, Descartes, Otto, and in each he finds his position. First, Tillich finds in Augustine a new form of epistemology and a new doctrine of knowledge. And,

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[21] ST I, p. 74.

[22] ST I, p. 208.

according to Tillich, Augustine starts with his consciousness rather than with extra-mental reality, and finds God by means of an immediate experience within his own soul.[23]

> Now therefore the source point of all philosophy of religion in the Augustinian tradition is the immediacy of the presence of God in the soul . . . the experience of the unconditional . . . This is not a matter of discussing whether or not somebody exists.[24]

In the first volume of Systematic Theology, the same approval is given to Augustine. The ontological argument is considered valid, not as an argument but as an analysis, and as a description of our experience.

> The presence within finitude of an element which transcends it is experienced both theoretically and practically. The theoretical side has been elaborated by Augustine, the practical side by Kant, and behind both of them stands Plato. . . . all elaborations have shown the presence of something unconditional within the self and the world. Unless such an element were present, the question of God never could have been asked, nor could an answer, even the answer of revelation, have been received.[25]

Later, in studying Descartes, Tillich finds the same idea expressed: "As Descartes argues: the infinite in our

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[23]". . . it must be said that there is no reason for preferring concepts taken from 'outside' to those taken from 'inside.' According to the self-world structure, both types are equally valid." ST I, p. 192. Tillich, however, does in practice prefer the concepts taken from within.

[24]Paul Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought" (New York: Classnotes, Union Theological Seminary, 1956), p. 98. (Mimeographed.)

[25]ST I, p. 206.

mind presupposes the infinite itself."[26] Here we see the value of natural theology. It gives us the right question and the very question is said to contain the answer. The question of God's presence presupposes God's presence within the soul. "The question of God is possible because an awareness of God is present in the question of God."[27] Ontologism, mysticism, German idealism, all these are involved here in Tillich's ecstatic reason. "God is nearer to a man than that man is to himself."[28] And Tillich is certain of the immanence of God for he has experienced God.

Tillich acknowledges his dependence on Rudolph Otto. Otto was a professor at Marburg when he wrote his book, The Idea of the Holy and Tillich, who was still there at that time, makes frequent references to this work. In both authors one finds the same stress on the element of the irrational, the same need of exclusive symbolism and the same emphasis on ecstatic reason. Like Tillich, Otto acknowledges his Kantian background.[29] "The proof that in the numinous we have to deal with purely a priori cognitive

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[26]Tillich, "The Idea of a Personal God," Union Review, 2:8-10, November, 1940, p. 8.

[27]ST I, p. 206.

[28]SF, p. 128.

[29]Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy, trans. John W. Harvey, (second edition; London: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 59-64.

elements is to be reached by introspection and a critical examination of reason such as Kant instituted."[30] The unconditional of Tillich is the holy of Otto, in fact, for Tillich that is the definition of the holy--the experience of the unconditional. The point to be made is that for Otto the holy is an a priori category of the mind.[31] The unconditional is also for Tillich an a priori category of the mind.

Both men, it will be remembered, are disciples of Schleiermacher. Tillich often refers to Schleiermacher with approval. Otto edited the addresses on religion of Schleiermacher and in his own Religious Essays he wrote an essay entitled "How Schleiermacher Rediscovered the Sensus Numinous."[32] This Sensus Numinous is the favorite word for both Tillich and Otto for the holy--the unconditional.

This background of German idealism is necessary to appreciate the metaphysics behind Tillichian symbolism, especially his theological symbols. "Religion gives us the experience of the Holy, of something which is untouchable,

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[30]Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p. 113.

[31]Cf. Ibid., p. 175.

[32]Rudolph Otto, Religious Essays, trans. Lunn (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 68.

awe-inspiring, an ultimate meaning . . ."[33] The above quotation is from Tillich. The following are from Otto:

> The Infinite for us is still the Incomprehensible. But what the comprehension cannot achieve we may achieve in the Feeling.[34]

> Although we cannot <u>say</u> what God is, we can feel it and we need not baulk the inquirer of his answer, for it may well be that we point him to the way in which the feeling can come to life within him.[35]

The function of the concrete element of every symbol is for both Otto and Tillich a means of putting the believer in contact with the feeling of the unconditional, of the holy. It is not aimed at enlightening his intellect. Therefore, for one who knows Otto well, the symbolism of Tillich is readily understood.

In rejecting both naturalism and supernaturalism, Tillich describes his own position as "self-transcendence."

> In terms of immediate experience it [self-transcendence] is the encounter with the holy, an encounter which has an ecstatic character. The term "ecstatic" in the phrase "ecstatic idea of God" points to the experience of the holy as transcending ordinary experience . . . Such an understanding of the idea of God is neither naturalistic nor supernaturalistic. It

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[33]Tillich, "Religion," <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 47. Cf. Tillich, "The Problem of the Theological Method," <u>Journal of Religion</u>, 27:16-26, January, 1947, p. 23.

[34]Rudolph Otto, <u>The Philosophy of Religion</u>, trans. E. B. Dicker (London: William and Norgate, 1931), p. 100.

[35]<u>Ibid.</u>, p.132.

underlies the whole of the present theological system.[36] That experience is expressed in concepts which constitute the concrete element of the symbol. Those concepts are not of themselves holy, that is, they are not unconditional; they point to the holy.

> . . . in the notion of God we must distinguish two elements: the element of ultimacy, which is a matter of immediate experience and not symbolic in itself, and the element of concreteness, which is taken from our ordinary experience and symbolically applied to God.[37]

In this idea of the numinous of Otto and the unconditional of Tillich there is expressed Calvin's idea of the majesty of God--the majesty that was incomprehensible. This experience of the unconditional is at the basis of Tillich's theory of ecstatic reason. It is a faculty of man distinct from his technical reason. "There is a kind of cognition implied in faith which is qualitatively different from the cognition involved in the technical, scholarly work of the

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[36] ST II, p. 8. Tillich broke with Barth precisely because of Barth's excessive naturalism. "Again I would approach the subject by recalling history. When Barth's commentary on Romans was published, a wide circle of theologians of the same age attached themselves to the school for which Barth had prepared the way. Some did so publicly, and some--like the author of this article [Tillich] --in a 'subterranean' group of fellow-laborers. In the course of a decade the situation has been completely changed. As the supernaturalistic trend of the Barthian thinking became more clearly evident, it became necessary for me to give up the 'subterranean' fellowship." Tillich, "What is Wrong with Dialectical Theology?", p. 136.

[37] DF, p. 46.

theologian."[38]

Then Tillich goes on to describe this new organ of reception as ecstatic reason.[39] "Ecstatic reason is reason grasped by an ultimate concern."[40] The passive element of this faculty is clear. The next section will point out the active element of this faculty which is called revelation. What natural theology is incapable of doing, ecstatic reason accomplishes.[41] This ecstatic reason is in fact a form of intuition, an intuition that is essential to an understanding of myth and symbol. The following extracts point out the relationship of natural theology and ecstatic reason. Natural theology asks the question, ecstatic reason answers it.

> Dialectic thinking maintains that the question about the divine possibility is a human possibility. And, further, it maintains that no question could be asked about the divine possibility unless a divine answer, even if preliminary and scarcely intelligible, were not always already available. For in order to be able to ask about God, man must already have experienced God as the goal of a possible question.[42]

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[38] ST I, p. 53.

[39] Nicolas Berdyaev likewise postulates a new faculty of knowledge. "The faculty of intuitive contemplation constitutes a new organ non-existent in the average consciousness and it is revealed only as the result of an intensive activity of the spirit." Berdyaev, Freedom and Spirit, p. 102.

[40] ST I, p. 53.

[41] Cf. ST I, p. 53. ST II, pp. 7-9.

[42] Tillich, "What is Wrong with Dialectical Theology?", p. 137.

"God can be known only by God himself, that is by revelation."[43]

Now we will consider the nature of revelation which is the active element of ecstatic reason, and the answer to the problem of natural theology.

Revelation--the Answer to Questions of Natural Theology

For Tillich "revelation is the manifestation of the ground of being for human knowledge."[44] It is not something in the conceptual order.

> . . . revelation does not . . . add anything directly to the totality of our ordinary knowledge, namely, to our knowledge about the subject-object structure of reality.[45]

He speaks of the paradox of revelation; it does include cognitive elements. We are dealing with mysteries.

> Something more is known of the mystery after it has become manifest in revelation. . . . its reality has become a matter of experience. . . . our relation to it has become a matter of experience.[46]

These constitute the cognitive elements of revelation--if one can call them truly cognitive. "Revelation is the manifestation of what concerns us ultimately."[47] Here "reason

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[43]Tillich, "Natural and Revealed Religion," p. 162.

[44]ST I, p. 94.

[45]ST I, p. 109.

[46]ST I, p. 109.

[47]ST I, p. 110. Emphasis added.

is driven beyond itself to its 'ground and abyss,' to that which 'precedes' reason, to the fact that 'being is and non-being is not' . . ."[48] This is the revelation of mystery. All other knowledge must be subjected to the test of whether or not it is a matter of ultimate concern. Revelation does not give us any other knowledge.[49] Only the person in a concrete situation of concern is capable of being grasped by revelation. "There is no revelation if there is no one who receives it as his ultimate concern."[50] There is the question of the medium of revelation and nothing is excluded as a medium. "Revelation is present wherever the divine appears . . ."[51] All reality is capable of being a means of revelation; all reality can act as a symbol since all reality participates in the ground of being.[52] Even when nature is a means of revelation, that revelation cannot be called natural revelation. "Revelation through natural mediums is not natural revelation."[53] This is another facet of his rejection of natural theology. Reason can never reach God, the ground of being. Tillich is aware of Paul's argument in his Epistle to the Romans concerning the visible things of creation speaking of the invisible.[54] He admits that nature

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[48] ST I, p. 110.
[49] Cf. ST I, p. 111.
[50] ST I, p. 111.
[51] IH, p. 233.
[52] Cf. ST I, p. 118.
[53] ST I, p. 119.
[54] ST I, p. 110.

can be a medium of revelation. "But nature cannot be an argumentative basis for conclusions about the mystery of being."[55] This we have already seen in the partial rejection of natural theology.

Revelation occurs when something or somebody is the medium of making someone else aware of the ground of being. He discusses the word as a means of revelation, but he does not admit that it adds to our information about the truths otherwise hidden. "Revelation is not revealed knowledge."[56] Revelation must be "grasping, shaking, and transforming."[57] And if the word of God did increase our information it would need these qualities. Once more we have Tillich's existentialist emphasis.[58] There are events and deeds, in fact, there is the "one great deed of God, the revelatory event which is called Jesus, the Christ."[59] But it is deeds that are revealed, not doctrines, not information. Scripture does not contain "revealed commandments nor revealed

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[55] ST I, p. 120.

[56] Paul Tillich, "What is Divine Revelation?" The Witness, 26:8-9, April, 1943, p. 8.

[57] ST I, p. 124.

[58] "Revelation can only be understood from an existential point of view as 'revelation for us.'" Tillich, "Existential Thinking in American Theology," Religion in Life, 10:452-55, Summer, 1941, p. 452.

[59] ST I, p. 125.

doctrines."[60]

There is obviously the question of difference in the experience of Moses and Paul and that of Tillich and ourselves. The meeting for the first time of miracle and ecstasy constitutes what Tillich considers to be "original revelation," for example, at Caesarea Philippi when Peter met Jesus whom he acknowledged as the Christ.[61] This is "an original revelatory ecstasy."[62] "Dependent revelation" occurs when the original experience is re-experienced. When subsequent believers (such as Tillich and ourselves) meet Jesus, we experience a "dependent revelation."

This experience, which is revelation, is as ready as prayer. But prayer, for Tillich, is not a conversation between two beings--that he considers blasphemy--but "if . . . it is understood as the 'elevation of the heart,' namely, the center of the personality, to God, it is a revelatory event."[63] Nor is revelation closed with the last

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[60] ST I, p. 125.

[61] The acceptance of revelation is inspiration. Peter's acceptance of Christ at Caesarea Philippi is an act of inspiration. Inspiration becomes another term for ecstasy. "Inspiration (is) the subjective side of revelation." Tillich, "What is Divine Revelation?", p. 8. Because of inspiration we have a new experience of the mystery of being and of our ultimate concern. Inspiration, therefore, describes the activity of original revelation. The work of the divine Spirit illuminating subsequent believers, Tillich calls "illumination." ST I, p. 127.

[62] ST I, p. 126.

[63] ST I, p. 127.

of the Apostles; as long as the individual is united with the ground of being, the situation is revelatory. Revelation, therefore, is always something existential. Propositions about past revelations have no revelatory power.[64]

Revelation is never the bearer of absolute truth from the fact that it is always existential. It is never an absolute. It is constantly subject to change. Revelation is here identified with the concrete element of symbol. The ones receiving revelation transform it and can transform the original revelation to such an extent that it disappears. It is possible, according to Tillich, that something at one period has revelatory value, that is, symbolic value, and at another time, none at all. As an example, we recall what Tillich has to say about the symbol of the Virgin Mother, Mary.[65]

Whatever value the first original revelation had is not lost but recaptured in the final revelation. The ultimate element of the symbol is never lost. Revelation must undergo the dialectics of "yes" and "no."[66] Here the concrete element of revelation is emphasized. "Knowledge of revelation does not increase our knowledge about the structures of nature, history, and man," nor of God.[67] Revealed

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[64]Cf. ST I, p. 127.

[65]Supra, chap. i, p. 59.

[66]Cf. ST I, p. 128.

[67]ST I, p. 129.

truth is apart from conceptual knowledge, from the ordinary knowledge of technical reason, and for this reason cannot be communicated. Communicated knowledge is not existential. Revelation, therefore, is impervious (just as the symbol is) to the attacks of the historian, the philosopher and the scientist. "Knowledge of revelation cannot interfere with ordinary knowledge."[68] And the reason is evident; it is not knowledge, it is merely experience.

> . . . knowledge of revelation can be received only in the situation of revelation, and it can be communicated--in contrast to ordinary knowledge--only to those who participate in this situation.[69]

"The truth of revelation is not dependent on criteria which are not themselves revelatory."[70] It must have its own criteria.

As long as the man is in the revelatory situation, as long as he is grasped in the ecstatic experience, that actual revelation is for him a "final revelation." That does not mean, however, that later when he is in another revelatory situation, that first revelation will become outmoded.[71] Christianity claims to be a final revelation. For Tillich, final revelation means "the decisive, fulfilling, unsurpassable revelation, that which is the criterion of all the others. This is the Christian claim, and this is the basis

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[68] ST I, p. 130.

[69] ST I, p. 129.

[70] ST I, p. 131.

[71] Cf. ST I, p. 132.

of a Christian theology."[72]

The question arises: what is the criterion of judging (and all judging must be done within the revelatory situation) the finality of the revelation in Jesus as the Christ? Tillich answers: ". . . revelation is final if it has the power of negating itself without losing itself."[73] This is another instance of Tillich's use of paradox. The reality of the paradox is founded on the fact that the medium of revelation is finite and in yielding its finite conditions, it overcomes them. To keep these conditions is to be "demonic" and fall into idolatry. This doctrine of revelation is an application of Tillich's symbolism. It must be kept in mind that what he says of revelation is no different from what we have seen concerning the general nature of all Christian symbols.

The following passage sums up and illustrates the Tillichian concept of revelation, namely, its distinction from ecstatic reason and experience, its a-conceptual subjective nature, its relationship to symbols and, finally, its existentialistic character.

> The word "revelation" has been distorted into "supra-natural communication of knowledge"; it is hard to save the word (and many others) from this state of corruption into which it has been brought by both supra-naturalism and naturalism. Nevertheless, "revelation" points to

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[72]Cf. ST I, p. 133.

[73]ST I, p. 133.

> something for which no other adequate word is available--certainly not "religious experience." Revelation is the manifestation of the ultimate ground and meaning of human existence (and implicitly of all existence). It is not a matter of objective knowledge, of empirical research or rational inference. It is a matter of ultimate concern; it grasps the total personality and is effective through a set of symbols. Revelation is not restricted to a special period of history, to special personalities or writings. It occurs wherever it "wills." But we can speak of it only if it has become revelation <u>for us</u>, if we have experienced it existentially. Not experience, but revelation received <u>in</u> experience, gives the content of every theology.[74]

II. THE TYPES OF THEOLOGICAL SYMBOLS

Because of the distinction between technical and ecstatic reason, there are two elements in the theological symbols: the ultimate and the concrete. For the sake of convenience, the following analysis of Tillich's theological symbols will be based on the Tillichian distinction between technical and ecstatic reason. The symbols, consequently, will be grouped into three categories: ultimate symbols, concrete symbols and mixed symbols. Although this division is not found in Tillich, its use is justified in giving us an orderly approach to his theological symbols. It will not betray their meaning, but rather clarify it.

The ultimate symbols are those in which technical reason plays no part. These are the exclusive function of

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[74]Tillich, "The Problem of the Theological Method," pp. 22-3.

ecstatic reason; they are a-conceptual symbols. It would be truer to say that they are not really symbols in the real sense, since they do not point beyond. They are identified with the beyond of all other symbols. These ultimate symbols will be the sole non-symbolic statements concerning God.

The concrete symbols are the constructions of technical reason. They will be seen to be the most dangerous, the most relative and the most dispensible.

Finally, there are the mixed symbols. Their construction is the united work of technical and ecstatic reason.

The following lengthy extract from "The Religious Symbol," gives a synthesis of Tillich's main views on theological symbols. It will serve as a suitable introduction to the analysis of those symbols which follow.

> The first and basic level of objective religious symbolism is the world of divine beings which, after the "breaking" of the myth is "the Supreme Being," God. The divine beings and the "Supreme Being," God are representations of that which is ultimately referred to in the religious act. They are representations, for the unconditioned transcendent, surpasses every possible conception of a being including even the conception of a "Supreme Being." In so far as any such being is assumed as existent, it is again annihilated in the religious act. In this annihilation, in this atheism immanent in the religious act the profoundest aspect of the religious act is manifest. Wherever this aspect is lost sight of, there results an objectification of the unconditioned (which is in essence opposed to objectification), a result which is destructive of the religious as well as of the cultural life. Thus God is made into a "thing" that is not a real thing, but a contradiction in terms and an absurdity; demanding belief in such a thing is demanding a religious "work," a sacrifice, an

act of asceticism and a self-destruction of the human mind. It is the religious function of atheism ever to remind us that the religious act has to do with the unconditioned transcencent, and that the representations of the unconditioned are not objects concerning whose existence or nonexistence a discussion would be possible. This oscillation between the setting up and the destruction of the religious object expresses itself immediately in the living idea of God. It is indeed true that the religious act really signifies what it refers to: it signifies God. But the word "God" involves a double meaning. It connotes the unconditioned transcendent, the ultimate and, also, an object somehow endowed with qualities and actions. The first is not figurative or symbolic, but it is rather, in the strictest sense, what it is said to be. The second, however, is really symbolic, figurative. It is the second that is an object envisioned by the religious consciousness. The idea of a Supreme Being possessing certain definite qualities is present in the consciousness. But the religious consciousness is also aware of the fact that when the word "God" is heard, this idea is figurative, that it does not signify an object, that is, it must be transcendent. The word "God" produces a contradiction in consciousness, it involves something figurative that is present in the consciousness and something not figurative that we really have in mind and that is represented by this idea. In the word "God" is contained at the same time that which actually functions as a representation and also the idea that it is only a representation. It has the peculiarity of transcending its own conceptual content: upon this depends the numinous character that the word has in science and in life in spite of every misuse through false subjectification. God as an object is a representation of a reality ultimately referred to in the religious act, but in the word "God" this objectivity is negated and at the same time its representative character is asserted.[75]

The Ultimate Symbols (Non-symbolic Statements)

Being--the ground of being. To state that God is a being is to subject him to the categories of finitude. Even

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[75]Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 26.

to call God the highest or most perfect being is of no avail, for He is still within the realm of the category. To speak of God as existing causes Tillich the same grave difficulty. Rather than call God "being," or "a being," or "existing," Tillich prefers the symbol "ground of being," or "power of being."[76] God is being-itself, not a being. All finite beings participate in this power of being. "It is as atheistic to affirm the existence of God as it is to deny it."[77]

The symbol of ground of being is also referred to as the depth of being and the abyss of being. "We call this object of the silent belief in the ultimate meaningfulness, this basis and abyss of all meaning which surpasses all that is conceivable, God."[78] Tillich goes from one term to another. They all, however, express the same reality, the reality that is identified with the ultimate element of all theological symbols. Tillich identifies this ground of being with the One of Plotinus--the One beyond all number. This ground of being is, therefore, beyond the separation of subject and object, in it there is said to be no change; it

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[76]The term "ground of being" appears early in Tillich's writings. In 1929 in an article entitled "The Idea and the Ideal of Personality," Tillich writes of the "holy"--the sacramental nature of all reality. "Everything has the power to become a symbol for the 'ground of being,' which it expresses in a special way." PE, p. 123.

[77]ST I, p. 237.

[78]IH, p. 222.

alone is eternal. Only "those propositions are theological which deal with a subject in so far as it belongs to the foundation of our being and in so far as the meaning of our existence depends on it."[79]

It seems that the experience of the holy is identical with the ecstatic experience of the ground of being. This latter term Tillich sometimes refers to as "depth."

> What does the metaphor <u>depth</u> mean? It means that the religious aspect points to that which is ultimate, infinite, unconditional in man's spiritual life. Religion, in the largest and most basic sense of the word, is ultimate concern. . . . Religion is the substance, the ground, and the depth of man's spiritual life. This is the religious aspect of the human spirit.[80]

Tillich presents the idea of the unconditional in 1922 in an article entitled "Kairos"[81] and it is mentioned again in 1929 when he is lecturing on the subject "Realism and Faith."

> But the really real is not reached until the unconditioned ground of everything real, or the unconditioned power in every power of being, is reached.
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> . . . . . .
>
> But it is the character of the unconditional that it cannot be grasped; its power includes its unapproachable mystery. If we try to grasp it, it is no longer the unconditional that we have in our hands--even if it has

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[79]Tillich, "The Problem of the Theological Method," p. 18.

[80]Tillich, "Religion," p. 47.

[81]Tillich, "Kairos," <u>Die Tat</u>, 14:330-350, 1922.

the highest religious or ontological names.[82]

Religion in the present existential state of estrangement gives us an experience of the holy. This is the glory of religion. Its shame is that it often makes its myths ultimate. It forgets that it exists only because of Original Sin. Without Original Sin there would be no need for religion--all would be holy. One could contact the depth of being everywhere; everything would be sacramental.

Existential theology searches and explores the ground of being.

> Existential is what characterizes our real existence in all its concreteness, in all its accidental elements, in its freedom and responsibility, in its failure and separation from its true and essential being. Theology thinks on the basis of this existential situation and in continuous relation to it. Asking for the meaning of being, theology asks for the ultimate ground and power and norm and aim of being as far as it is <u>my</u> being and carries <u>me</u> as the abyss and ground of my existence, for the threatening and promising power over my existence, for the demanding and judging norm of my existence, for the fulfilling and rejecting aim of my existence.[83]

Tillich writes a meditation commenting on 1 Cor.2,10: "The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God." In this text of St. Paul he finds expressed his own

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[82]<u>PE</u>, p. 76. This lecture appeared in <u>Religiose Verwirklichung</u>. The inability of the intellect to grasp the unconditional is just as clear here in the 1929 writings of Paul Tillich as those of 1957.

[83]Tillich, "Philosophy and Theology," <u>Religion in Life</u>, 10:21-30, Winter, 1941, p. 25.

idea of depth. There is the surface aspect of reality and if our judgments are based on this aspect, they will often fail. This is the weakness of the concrete element of symbolism. We must go deeper. This is one of the advantages and contributions of depth psychology; it tries to lead us beneath the surface of our self-knowledge into the depth of our being. It can help us toward finding the depth but

> . . . it can <u>not</u> give the final help, because it cannot guide into the deepest ground of our being and of all being, the depth of life itself.
>
> The name of this infinite and inexhaustible depth and ground of all being is God. This is what the word God means. And if this word has not much meaning for you, translate it and speak of the depth of your life and the source of your being and of your ultimate concern and of what you take seriously without any reservation. Perhaps, in order to do so, it may be necessary for you to forget everything traditional you have learned about God, even the word itself. If you know what God means the depth then you know much about him. You cannot then call yourselves atheists or unbelievers. For you cannot think and say: "There is no depth in life! Life itself is shallow, Being itself is surface." Only if you could say this in complete seriousness you would be atheists--otherwise not. For he who knows about the depth within himself knows about God.[84]

Ground of being is a word for God, or rather for what Tillich refers to as the "God above God."[85] This symbol, ground of being, is beyond the realm of concept, of category;

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[84]Tillich, "Depth," <u>Christendom</u>, 9:317-325, Summer, 1944, p. 320. Tillich identifies this depth of the ground of being with God. Ground of being is likewise identified with our ultimate concern.

[85]Paul Tillich, <u>The Courage To Be</u>, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 182.

it is irrational. All the symbols of God point to this one. It is this reality that man experiences in the ecstatic experience of faith. It transcends the categories and thus cannot be identified with them, although ground of being does contain elements of cause and of substance. Although man's intellect cannot reach God, man can reach God. The intellect of man does not reach the ultimate, but man knows that there is something behind the phenomenon. That unknown is what Tillich refers to when he writes of the ground of being. All of reality is capable of becoming a "symbol for the 'ground of being,' which it expresses in its special way."[86] This very fact that the intellect cannot express the ground of being in its conceptual language is the justification of the concrete element of the theological symbols.[87]

In a sermon entitled "By What Authority?" Tillich dispenses with the authority of Pope and Council and exhorts his listeners ". . . you must keep yourselves open to the power of Him who is the ground and the negation of everything which is authority and in Heaven!"[88] Pope and Council, by claiming infallibility, are claiming what Tillich says is the unique prerogative of the ground of being. They are,

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[86] PE, p. 123.

[87] Cf. Tillich, "The Idea of a Personal God," pp. 9-10.

[88] NB, p. 91.

therefore, obstacles to the self-manifestation of the ground of being.

Although God is the ground of the ontological structure of being, He is not subject to that structure Himself. This will be clearer when dealing with the other symbols, for example, God as cause. Because God is the ground of being, He is said to participate in all life, to participate in all being. "The divine life participates in every life as its ground and aim . . . Certainly such statements are highly symbolic."[89]

For Tillich, the word "participation" does not have its traditional meaning.[90] With his interpretation of the ground of being, Tillich attempts to avoid naturalism and supernaturalism. He defines naturalism as an identification of God with the universe or the ground of the universe, however, not acknowledging the distance between them. Naturalism denies God's transcendence. Tillich defines supernaturalism as the position which "separates God as a being, the

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[89] ST I, p. 245. Tillich refuses to make a distinction between the divine life and the divine creativity. The fact that God is God is the ultimate explanation of his creativity. God must create. To ask the question whether creation is free or not is a meaningless question. Creation is one with God's life "since the divine life is essentially creative . . ." ST I, p. 253. Man is aware of his finitude. That awareness is the question; creation is the answer--an answer that comes from revelation. Cf. ST I, pp. 252-4.

[90] Cf. ST I, p. 253.

highest being, from all other beings, alongside and above which he has his existence."[91] This is Dr. Tillich's interpretation of the Roman Catholic position.

Here God is reduced to a category of being, according to Tillich. His own position, as we have already seen, is called self-transcendent or ecstatic realism. God as the ground of being transcends that of which he is the ground. He is distinct from the world. The world points by its very finitude beyond itself. The encounter with the ground of being has an ecstatic character; it is experienced. The fact of infinite transcending being, therefore makes any knowledge of being completely useless in giving us a knowledge of God. This is the basis for the weakness and the relativity of the concrete element of all symbols.[92] Bring these two elements together and the result is "analogous symbolic knowledge of God."[93]

Tillich shows his adherence to Schelling in a lecture "Realism and Faith" given in 1929 when he speaks of what is "'before reason,' the Unvordenkliche, as Schelling has called it, ('that which thinking cannot penetrate'), the

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[91] ST II, p. 6.

[92] "Only symbolism is capable of expressing and safeguarding the infinite depth and mystery of the divine world." Berdyaev, Freedom and the Spirit, p. 63.

[93] ST II, p.9.

originally given, the ground and abyss of everything that is."[94]

This claim that there is some area impervious to the light of the intellect is still part of Tillichian symbolism. This is the reason, in fact, for the ultimate element of the symbol and for ecstatic reason.

In 1922 Tillich refers to the unconditional. This has ever been a favorite expression for the non-conceptual element of our theological symbols.

> The ideas here set forth present a summons to a thinking that is conscious of history, to a consciousness of history whose roots reach down into the depth of the unconditional.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The unconditional cannot be identified with any given reality, whether past or future; there is no absolute church, there is no absolute kingdom of reason and justice in history.[95]

"Everything can be a vessel of the unconditional, but nothing can be unconditioned itself."[96] Tillich's idea of the Protestant principle, of the nature of the holy, of symbolism, all find their expression in this one sentence written in 1922.

The reading of Systematic Theology will show that the years have not altered these basic principles of Tillichian thought.

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[94] PE, p. 76. [95] PE, pp. 32-7. [96] PE, p. 47.

Spirit. Tillich asserts that, as a general rule, one symbol must be interpreted in relationship to another symbol, however, there is an exception. To refer to God as a Spirit is to use a symbol that need not be related to any other symbol. "This is the most embracing, direct, and unrestricted symbol for the divine life. It does not need to be balanced with another symbol, because it includes all the ontological elements."[97] The idea of spirit does not stand in counterdistinction to body; within it is contained both the element of power and of meaning, and the element of the irrational and the rational. The power which includes centered personality, self-transcending vitality, freedom of self-determination; and meaning, which includes universal participation, form and structures of reality, limiting and directing destiny, are united one to another to form spirit. "Spirit is the power through which meaning lives, and it is the meaning which gives direction to power. God as Spirit is the ultimate unity of both power and meaning."[98] Spirit, therefore, is one of the trinitarian principles. The trinitarian symbol is a mixed symbol, while the symbol of Spirit remains an ultimate symbol. These principles will prepare the way for the symbol of the Trinity. And the meaning of the symbol, Spirit, can only be approached in its relationship to the other trinitarian principles.

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[97] ST I, p. 249.

[98] ST I, p. 250.

The first principle is the ground and abyss, identifiable with the "first potency" of Schelling and the "Ungrund" of Böhme. Here there is the ultimate of power and this is the ultimate. This is what makes God, God. All reality has its origin in this first principle. Here Tillich seems to rely on Böhme and his doctrine of the Ungrund.[99]

In describing the second principle Tillich uses the term "logos" which characterizes the element of meaning. It is this logos which makes the darkness of the first principle intelligible. The ground of being, that is, the first element, is creative by means of the second principle. But more of this later when we come to the trinitarian symbol. It must be mentioned in passing, however, in order to penetrate the meaning of the spirit.

The third principle then is spirit. It is the

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[99]The originality of Paul Tillich is not to be found so much in any one facet of his theological system, but rather in the unity of elements he has borrowed from others. The following passage of Jacob Böhme, the mystic German cobbler, is, it seems, the same as what Tillich is trying to say in his symbol of the spirit: ". . . we recognize an eternal, unfathomable divine Essence, and in its nature, three persons, whereof one is not the other. The first person is the eternal Will which is the cause of all being. This will is not being itself but the cause of all being, and is free from being, for it is the Unground. Jacob Böhme, Of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, trans. John Rolleston Earle, (London: Constable and Co., 1934), p. 157. This Ungrund is the eternity beyond nature and creature, the eternal no-thing of the unconditional abyss which sees and discovers itself as conditioned being.

> actualization of the other two principles . . . Both power and meaning are contained in it and united in it. It makes them creative. The third principle is in a way the whole (God is Spirit), and in a way it is a special principle (God has the Spirit as he has the logos.)[100]

Spirit, therefore, is a symbol of the divine life pointing to its creativity. The spirit is to be the subject of a more detailed treatment in the third and final volume of Systematic Theology which has as yet not been published.

III. CONCRETE SYMBOLS (SYMBOLIC STATEMENTS)

Personal God

The reason for the various attempts to make God a person is not because God is a person, but because man cannot talk to a thing. Man, therefore, expresses and thinks of God as a person. This, according to Tillich, has ever been so--even in the most primitive forms of nature worship.

> This explains the fact that all divine powers--stones and stars, plants and animals, spirits and angels, and every single one of the great mythological gods--possess a personal character. It explains the fact that actually there is a struggle for a personal God in all religions, a struggle which resists all philosophical attacks.[101]

Tillich, however, does not make any philosophical struggle here. "The symbol 'personal God' is absolutely fundamental

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[100] ST I, p. 251. Cf. ST II, p. 4. [101] ST I, p. 223.

because an existential relation is a person-to-person relation."[102] His existentialist spirit seeks God as a person. God is the ground of our personality. We are persons precisely because God is the ground of our personality.[103] This justifies the concrete element of this symbol.

To say that God is not personal does not mean that he is subpersonal (Tillich aims at defending the divine transcendence) anymore than to say that He is not, literally speaking, a living God, is the equivalent of saying that He is non-living. The consideration of God as a person is a nineteenth-century innovation, according to Tillich, consequent upon

> . . . the Kantian separation of nature ruled by physical law from personality ruled by moral law. Ordinary theism has made God a heavenly, completely perfect person who resides above the world and mankind. The protest of atheism against such a highest person is correct. There is no evidence for his existence, nor is he a matter of ultimate concern. God is not God without universal participation. "Personal God" is a confusing symbol.[104]

It is a confusing symbol because it "makes God a natural object beside others . . . a being amongst beings . . ."[105]

The biblical symbols for God necessarily provoke

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[102] ST I, p. 244.

[103] Cf. ST I, p. 245.

[104] ST I, p. 245.

[105] Tillich, "The Idea of a Personal God," p. 9.

ontological questions.[106] One can, according to Tillich, satisfactorily resolve the tension existing between concept and symbol regardless of the philosophy he espouses, whether it be that of Aristotle or Whitehead, Hegel or Laotze; it makes no difference. "The God who is _a_ being is transcended by the God who is Being itself . . . the God who is _a_ person is transcended by the God who is the Personal-Itself . . ."[107]

> If the biblical religion is not only personal but the source of the full meaning of _person_, how can the a-personal concept "being" be of ultimate concern and a matter of infinite passion? Is this first confrontation not also the last, namely, the end of all attempts to achieve a synthesis between ontology and biblical religion? Is not God in the religious encounter _a_ person among others, related to them as an _I_ to a _thou_, and vice versa? And, if so, is he not _a_ being, while the ontological question asks the question of being-itself, of the power of being in and above all beings? In the ontological question, is not God himself transcended?[108]

The personal symbol, according to Tillich, is dangerous and confusing, yet it does have its usefullness in that it prevents the believer from falling into a subpersonal relationship. But if it makes the ground of being identical to a being--even the highest--then it is an idol and must be rejected.[109] "The danger of a personal symbol is only that its symbolic character may be forgotten . . ."[110]

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[106] Cf. _BR_, p. 83.

[107] _BR_, pp. 82-3.

[108] _BR_, pp. 27-8.

[109] Cf. _ST I_, p. 237.

[110] _PE_, p. 119.

The following passage summarizes Tillich's symbol of a personal God.

> But why must the symbol of the personal be used at all? The answer can be given through a term used by Einstein himself: "The supra-personal." The depth of being cannot be symbolized by objects taken from a realm which is lower than the personal, from the realm of things or sub-personal living beings. The supra-personal is not an "It" or, more exactly, it is a "He" as much as it is an "It," and it is, above both of them. But if the "He" element is left out, the "It" element transforms the alleged supra-personal into a sub-personal as it usually happens in monism and pantheism and such a neutral sub-personal cannot grasp the center of our personality. . ."[111]

Tillich's intellect is satisfied with the concrete element of the theological symbols. But this extract shows, as does his whole existentialist tendency, his preoccupation with will and feeling. The concrete element of a symbol satisfies his intellect and, therefore, it has its value.

The ultimate element of these concrete symbols is aimed at satisfying the will, and it is this element alone that has real value. That satisfaction is something that cannot be produced by the concrete element of any symbol.

> . . . it can satisfy our aesthetic feeling or our intellectual needs, but it cannot convert our will. It cannot overcome our loneliness, anxiety and despair. For as the philosopher Schelling says: "Only a person can heal a person." This is the reason that the symbol of the Personal God is indispensible for living religion. It is a symbol, not an object, and it never should be interpreted as an object. And it is one symbol beside others indicating that our personal center is grasped by

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[111]Tillich, "The Idea of a Personal God," p. 10.

> the manifestation of the unaccessible ground and abyss of being.[112]

The First Cause--the Divine Substance

When we speak of causality and God, the word "causality" is not a category, but a symbol. And, likewise, when speaking of God as a substance, Tillich insists that it is used symbolically.

> But the category of causality cannot "fill the bill," for cause and effect are not separate; they include each other and form a series which is endless in both directions. What is cause at one point in this series is effect at another point and conversely. God as cause is drawn into this series, which drives even him beyond himself. In order to disengage the divine cause from the series of causes and effects, it is called the first cause, the absolute beginning. What this means is that the category of causality is being denied while it is being used. In other words, causality is being used not as a category but as a symbol.[113]

The contact Tillich has made with the ground of being in the experience of ecstatic reason makes him feel safe. This contact is the reason for his courage. The ground of being underlies the structure of reality. It is what is behind the philosophical concepts used, concepts like cause and substance. When we do speak of God it is in terms taken from a structural reality, and this is the justification of the ontological principles taken from philosophy.

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[112]Tillich, "The Idea of a Personal God," p. 10.

[113] ST I, p. 238.

In theology, however, these concepts do become symbols looking to something behind them. They may never be taken literally, properly, or even, analogously. Statements such as: "God is being-itself," "God is the ground of being," are true (and they do not need to be interpreted). They are non-symbolic statements. They go beyond the categories, there is no conceptual concrete element in them. These statements do not point beyond themselves. We can stop here with them, but the rest of the statements, all the other predicates--such as, causality and substance--must point beyond themselves or become idolatrous. To say that God is the first cause, therefore, does not mean that God is the first in a chain of causalities (whether that chain be of a horizontal or a vertical nature) it simply points to the fact that God is the ground of all causes. To say that God is the first substance is merely to say that God is the ground of all substances.[114]

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[114]In a work which treats of the influence of Heidegger on Bultmann, the same idea is expressed. Tillich admits his dependence on both Heidegger, the existentialist philosopher, and Bultmann, the existentialist theologian. When speaking of God we can say "that he is the First Cause or that he is our Father in heaven. But already in the use of such symbols we are into the realm of the mythical." John Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, (London: S.C.M. Press, Ltd., 1955), p. 174. Professor Tillich describes his own philosophical position within modern Protestantism by saying: ". . . one must acknowledge that there are recent movements in philosophy which partly prepared existentialism, partly went parallel to it. I have already pointed to the

IV. MIXED SYMBOLS

The Trinitarian Symbol

There is a dialectical tension within the theological symbols. The reason for this tension within the symbol is the result of the tension existing within the theologian himself from whose consciousness the symbols come. It is, therefore, within the theologian that Tillich finds these tensions and problems that are to be resolved by means of the trinitarian symbol. The theologian is possessed of technical reason that seeks satisfaction in a plurality of concepts, that is, the concrete element of the symbols. But he is also possessed of ecstatic reason which by the very nature of its mystic experience contacts the ultimate, the abyss and ground of the theological symbols. The will,

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the great significance Husserl's phenomenological method had positively and negatively for existentialists like Heidegger. Obvious, also, is the influence of the philosophers of life--Bergson, Dilthey, Scheler--on contemporary existentialism. Less obvious, but very real, is the parallelism of American pragmatism as represented by James and Dewey in their attempt to overcome the subject-object separation in philosophical thought. Partly parallel to, partly dependent on the existentialist philosophy--especially on Kierkegaard--is the 'theology of crisis' which today is split into a traditionalistic and a critical wing, the former represented by Karl Barth and his large school, the latter by Rudolph Bultmann who, through his bold Biblical criticism and on the basis of Heidegger's interpretation of existence, has made a great impression within recent years. I see myself within this group. Tillich, "Nature and the Significance of Existentialist Thought," Journal of Philosophy, 53:747, November 8, 1956.

therefore, or in the language of Tillich, ecstatic reason, reaches the one; the intellect, or in the language of Tillich, technical reason, reaches the many. There is, therefore, the problem of the one and the many, or as Tillich sees it, the problem between the polytheistic elements and the monotheistic elements of theological symbols. The activity of technical reason is the source of polytheism. The source of monotheism is to be found in the ecstatic reason, that is, in mystic experience.

Tillich gives an analysis of both polytheism and monotheism. This analysis is both philosophical and theological. The following will be a brief resume of that position. This is important--for the trinitarian symbol of Tillich can only be understood as an answer raised by the problem of polytheistic and monotheistic elements in the theological symbols. ". . . the need for a balance between the concrete and the absolute drives him toward trinitarian structures."[115] The question of polytheism is not the question of many gods. "Polytheism is a qualitative and not a quantitative concept."[116] It is rather a question of the predominance of the concrete element of the theological symbol over the ultimate element. It is never, however, a question of the exclusion of that element. There are several

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[115] ST I, p. 221.

[116] ST I, p. 222.

ways of emphasizing the concrete element, and these several ways are the basis for the distinction that Tillich makes in polytheism itself.

He divides polytheism into the mythological, the universalistic and the dualistic. Each has a certain value and each has a weakness; each, too, has its philosophical counterpart which will be mentioned. The mythological type is found in Greek myth. It has the advantage of making the concrete element of the theological symbol very concrete--it makes its gods persons who are capable of loving and hating and so forth. Yet the very personalistic element of this type of polytheism is dangerous. It is only too easy for the believer to stop with his gods and not go beyond. When he prays to his gods, he is liable not to go beyond to the ultimate of which they are but the symbols. This mythical polytheism of the theologian is called pluralistic naturalism by the philosopher. It is the philosophical problem of the one and the many. The pluralistic aspect of nature is seen to predominate--but not to the exclusion of the divine. "The world which is supposed to be pluralistic is one at least in this respect--that it can be recognized as a world, an ordered unity, although it has pluralistic characteristics."[117]

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[117] ST I, p. 232.

The universalistic type of polytheism is expressed in those religions that recognize God in the forces of nature, in the sun, for example, or in fire, or in the moon. Such polytheistic symbols have a certain value in that their very subhuman character does not tempt man to stop there, but invites him to go beyond to the vitality and the power and the awesomeness of the ground of being. Their numinous character is their strongpoint; their weakness is that they are not concrete enough to win or to express man's ultimate concern.

Zoroastrianism and Manicheism are good examples of the dualistic form of polytheism. The basis for these dualistic myths is the distinction between the secular and the holy--the profane and the sacred. There are two forces and each has its domain of activity. Evil and good are but the concrete elements of this mythological symbol, and they point to the ultimate good that embraces both the good and its opposite. What the theologian here considers as dualistic polytheism, the philosopher calls metaphysical dualism. There is the struggle between nature and freedom, between the irrational will and the irrational idea.

For Tillich there is no absolute form of polytheism possible. There is ever an action and a reaction between the ultimate and the concrete, between monotheism and polytheism. The life of polytheism is said to depend on the

vigor of the monotheistic reaction. Each form of polytheism leads, therefore, to monotheism. For Tillich, however, there is more than one form of monotheism, and the distinctions in monotheism are based, according to Tillich, on just how dominant or exclusive the ultimate element is within the theological symbol.

Monotheism is divided by him into monarchic, mystical and exclusive monotheism. Each has this in common, that each draws the believer towards the ultimate element of the theological symbols. Monotheism will use myth, that is, the concrete in its symbols, but there myths will be broken, that is, the concrete element will never be identified with the ultimate; it will ever be recognized as concrete.

Monarchic monotheism presents God as a ruler of lesser gods. He, however, is the Lord, the Absolute. This form Tillich finds not only in the Stoics identity of Zeus with the ultimate ontological principle, but he finds it, likewise in Christianity. Christianity presents God as the Lord of the Angels.[118] This type of monotheism blends both monotheism and polytheism. The concrete element of this theological symbol must be broken, that is, one must realize its mythical character. That, of course, Tillich does in

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[118]Tillich does not consider angels as beings but as structures of reality.

denying that angels are beings. The concrete element is seen as concrete. This form of monotheism is called gradualistic metaphysics by the philosopher. It is the supremacy of the absolute, whether expressed in the language of Plato or Aristotle or Aquinas. Here the degrees of being have significance.

Mystical monotheism, on the contrary, has no use for angels or demons. In this form of monotheism there is no concrete element in the theological symbol; man goes directly to the ground of his being, to the one that is beyond the conflict of good and evil--angels and demons. It would be truer to say that here, in reality, there is no symbol. However, the exclusive character of the ultimate element is not sufficient to satisfy man (man needs to have myths) and, therefore, divine powers reappear and through them the one is made manifest. This expression of monotheism is called by the philosopher: idealistic monism.

The last form of monotheism is exclusive monotheism which raises a concrete God to ultimacy, without either sacrificing his concreteness or without making a demonic claim. The God of Israel is an example of a concrete God becoming ultimate and universal without either losing the concrete element or without being ultimate.[119] He is both

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[119]Cf. ST I, p. 227.

ultimate and not ultimate. Even here Tillich sees a danger. In exclusive monotheism the concrete element in the symbol of God can be lost. The advantage, however, is that here there is no danger of polytheism. The need of an expression of the concrete element of man's ultimate concern is the basis, therefore, in Tillich, for the trinitarian symbol in his theology.

The trinitarian principle is useful to reveal God but that does not mean that God is triune. The balance between the concrete and the ultimate elements is expressed in this mixed symbol that has both the advantages of polytheism and the advantages of monotheism. Nowhere is the dialectical nature of Tillich's theology more evident. It is indeed the full-flowering of German idealistic philosophy expressed, however, in the language of Christian theology. The trinitarian symbol is not, therefore, the traditional Christian dogma of three Divine Persons in one Divine Essence.

> Trinitarian monotheism is not a matter of the number three. It is a qualitative and not a quantitative characterization of God. It is an attempt to speak of the living God, the God in whom the ultimate and the concrete are united. The number three has no specific significance in itself, although it comes nearest to an adequate description of life-processes. Even in the history of the Christian doctrine of the trinity there have been vascillations [sic] between trinitarian and binitarian emphasis (the discussion about the position of the Holy Ghost) and between trinity and quaternity (the question about the relation of the Father to the common divine substance of the three <u>personae</u>). The trinitarian problem has nothing to do with the trick question how one can be three and three be one. The

> answer to this question is given in every life-process. The trinitarian problem is the problem of the unity between ultimacy and concreteness in the living God. Trinitarian monotheism is concrete monotheism, the affirmation of the living God.[120]

The trinitarian symbol is quite clearly not an exclusive Christian idea; it is a problem that preceded Christ.

> The trinitarian problem is a perennial feature of the history of religion. . . . In some cases monarchical monotheism reaches quasi-trinitarian formulas; a father-divinity, a mother-divinity, and a child-divinity are united in the same myth and in the same cult.[121]

Mystical monotheism, too, is said to have its trinity. The god, Brahma, is distinguished from the Brahman principle. It is the Brahman principle that expresses the ultimate element, the ground of being. The god, Brahma, is the concrete element which is united with Shiva and Vishnu to form a triad.

> Here again the number three is not important. It is the relation of the Brahman-Atman, the absolute, to the concrete gods of Hindu piety which is central. The question of the ontological standing of Brahma and the others in relation to Brahman, the principle of being-itself, is a genuine trinitarian question, analogous to the Origenistic question of the ontological standing of the Logos and the Spirit in relation to the abyss of the divine nature. Nevertheless, there is a decisive difference between them--the presence of exclusive monotheism in Christianity.[122]

In exclusive monotheism there is the tension between the transcendence of the ultimate and the concrete manifestations of the divine. To resolve this tension, mediating

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[120] ST I, p. 228. [121] ST I, p. 228. [122] ST I, p. 229.

powers are posited that have a three-fold character. They posit the trinitarian problem.

> The first group of these mediators is made up of hypostasized divine qualities, like Wisdom, Word, Glory. The second group are the angels, the divine messengers who represent special divine functions. The third is the divine-human figure through whom God works the fulfilment of history, the Messiah. In all these the God who had become absolutely transcendent and unapproachable now becomes concrete and present in time and space. The significance of these mediators grows as the distance between God and man increases, and, to the degree to which they become more significant, the trinitarian problem becomes more acute, more urgent.123

The trinitarian principle becomes a matter of dialectics. There is no question of a Father, a Son, or a Holy Spirit in the traditional meaning. Persons are said to have come into existence in the nineteenth century. Man's ultimate concern is symbolized and theology uses the concepts of philosophy to express these symbols.

Tillich defends Hegel's dialectical realism. This is the philosophical name for trinitarian monotheism. Thinking must pass through the "yes" and "no" into the "yes" again. The leading idea of this system of Hegel was that of a dialectical process of thought. When we are thinking or arguing we come to points where we seem to be up against contradiction; one side maintains one idea--the thesis--the opposite--the antithesis. But on further examination it is

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123 *ST* I, p. 229.

sometimes possible to show that these opposing ideas are not really mutually contradictory but complementary. By finding an idea which will include the contribution of both sides, they can be reconciled in a higher synthesis.

It has already been pointed out that not only thinking goes through this process, but being does the same. The application of the dialectical process applied to being gives us the trinitarian principle. Thus, in this position alone, of dialectical realism, is there the concrete and the ultimate in proper relationship.

> Dialectical realism tries to unite the structural oneness of everything within the absolute with the undecided and unfinished manifoldness of the real. It tries to show that the concrete is present in the depth of the ultimate.[124]

It is in this field that the relationship of philosophical concepts and religious symbols--the boundary situation field--that Tillich moves. Man is first a theologian in his experiencing of a ground of being. Then he tries to conceptualize that experience. Philosophy tries to test the "theoretical validity" of its concepts and theology searches their "existential significance."[125]

After this analysis of the relationship between the monotheistic and the polytheistic elements in the theological symbols, the trinitarian symbol can be seen for what it

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[124] ST I, pp. 234-5.

[125] ST I, p. 235.

is. It is useful in describing the various manifestations of the One God. God the Father is, therefore, the abyss and ground of being. Here there is the irrational element of the divine being, the element of will.[126] The Second Person of the Trinity points to the rational element in God, to the Logos, to the element of form. Since our intellect cannot penetrate the abyss, it is the Logos that opens up the abyss to us.[127] And, finally, the Spirit points to the dynamics in God. These are three manifestations of God. These manifestations are sometimes called masks or *personae*. The masks are the concrete element of the trinitarian symbol used, not to hide, but to reveal the One.

The Living God

The Old Testament often speaks of God as a "living God." Tillich agrees that one can speak of God as a "living God." But all of this is said symbolically. ". . . we cannot speak of God as living in the proper or nonsymbolic sense of the word 'life'"[128] To speak of God as living is an anthropomorphism which is inadequate when speaking of God religiously. One task of the theologian, according to Tillich, is to make man more aware of the feeling of the ground

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[126] Cf. *ST I*, pp. 156-7.

[127] Cf. *ST I*, p. 251.

[128] *ST I*, p. 242.

of being that transcends such symbols.

Although the symbol, "living God," does include the philosophical concept, life, the concept points to an a-conceptual element which Tillich, as we shall see, calls the element of non-being. This is, consequently, the reason for classifying this symbol as a mixed symbol. In this symbol Tillich does not wish to speak of a God who is becoming. In all fairness, this must be emphasized. Tillich, likewise, clearly rejects the idea of God as actus purus; this appears to him to make God static. "Pure actuality, that is, actuality free from any element of potentiality, is a fixed result; it is not alive. . . . The God who is actus purus is not the living God."[129] Yet, elsewhere, this is seemingly contradicted. Tillich asserts that "in God as God there is no distinction between potentiality and actuality."[130]

He, likewise, speaks of process in God, of becoming in God. This, however, is clearly symbolic language. Tillich does not divide being from becoming, rather, he finds that God who is being includes both becoming and rest. The becoming is a dynamic element and the being is the element of form. The becoming has its origin in the non-being that we find in God. These two elements are the basis for the tension in God and for this symbol, living God. Without the

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[129] ST I, p. 246.

[130] ST I, p. 242.

non-being in God there would be no activity--there would be no life.

Professor Tillich recognizes that his symbols are concepts borrowed from philosophy, but he also denies that theology is drawn from philosophy or dependent on philosophy. These concepts or symbolic terms of the living God do participate in the reality toward which they point; that is a principle valid for all symbols. The fact, that they participate in that toward which they point, drives Tillich to analyze the ontological structure of that ultimate element, that is, what there is in God that warrants and justifies the concrete element of the symbol, living God. He finds non-being to be the answer--an answer not reached by reason but by revelation.[131] In The Courage To Be, Tillich asserts that "nonbeing belongs to being, it cannot be separated from it. . . . being could not be the ground of life without nonbeing."[132] It is this element of nonbeing that is the ultimate reason for asserting that God is a living God. The "yes" in God would be lifeless without the "no" to be overcome. This nonbeing of Tillich is not to be identified with nothing (this is not his intention) it is rather the me-on

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[131]Cf. ST I, p. 243.

[132]CB, p.179. The very fact that there is life depends on this element of nonbeing.

that is relative nonbeing. It is a principle of being rather than a being. What is important is that Tillich finds this principle of being in God, not only in His creatures.[133] It is precisely because of this nonbeing that God is said to be alive. There is no mistaking the insistence on the element of process. "We assert that he [God] is the eternal process in which separation is posited and is overcome by reunion. In this sense, God lives."[134] It is this potentiality in being, in contrast to beings with form. Tillich finds this me-on in Böhme, where it is called the Ungrund; in Schelling, it is the "first potency"; in Schopenhauer, the will. The very nature of this being defies conceptualization, and for that very reason, it is irrational.

This symbol clearly involves the rational and the irrational. The rational concept of philosophy is the concrete element; the a-conceptual or irrational concept of theology is the ultimate element. The two unite to form the symbol--living God.

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[133]Cf. ST I, pp. 179-80.

[134]ST I, p. 242.

CHAPTER III

THE MEANING OF THE SYMBOL--ORIGINAL SIN

Whoever considers the person and the nature and the activity of Jesus Christ will do so, largely, in relationship to his own understanding of original sin. The inner logic of Paul Tillich's christological symbols will become evident once his doctrine on original sin has been grasped. No dogma of divine revelation is given a more complete existentialist treatment than that of original sin.

Tillich starts first with his own inner experience. And his analysis of that experience shows a tension, first within himself, and then a division (a tension, in reality) between individuals and between himself and the ground of his being. This division places the problem that the symbol of original sin is calculated to answer. "Conscience bears witness to another order of things, and our longing for a state beyond the tragedy of existence creates a past or future paradise . . ."[1]

The symbol of original sin as presented by Paul Tillich is a good illustration of his theological method of

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[1]Paul Tillich, "A Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of the Incarnation," Church Quarterly Review, 147:113-148, January, 1949, p. 141.

correlation.

> Question and answer must be correlated in such a way that the religious symbol is interpreted as the adequate answer to a question, implied in man's existence, and asked in primitive, pre-philosophical, or elaborated philosophical terms.[2]

The question arises for Tillich, not only from the evidence of conscience, but from all of reality, past and present. Art, literature, depth psychology, all bear witness to man's being. There is the tragic character of being, of its anxiety, of its meaninglessness. Tillich starts with a description of reality that one finds in Kierkegaard, Jaspers, or Heidegger.

From the present state of reality, Tillich goes to a prior state of reality in which these anxieties and tensions have no part. This prior state is what he refers to as a state of "dreaming innocence." There is in the dream a mixture of the real and the unreal, and so, too, in the essential order there is a certain reality and there is non-reality.[3] The prior state, the state of "dreaming innocence," is identified with the essential order.

The symbol of original sin is based on the distinction between what man is essentially and what man is existentially. The essential man is man as he exists in the

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[2]Tillich, "The Problem of the Theological Method," p. 25.

[3]Cf. ST II, p. 34.

divine mind. This is man as he ought to be. Man as he exists in the twentieth century is man as he ought not to be.[4] The relationship of these two philosophical concepts of essence and existence is very important for it

> is identical with the entire theological system. The distinction between essence and existence, which religiously speaking is the distinction between the created and the actual world, is the backbone of the whole body of theological thought.[5]

Essence, therefore, means the world and man before the Fall. "Essence . . . [is] that from which being has 'fallen.'"[6] And, in contrast, existence means the "'fallen world.'"[7]

Professor Tillich uses the account of the Fall as recounted in the third chapter of the Book of Genesis.[8]

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[4]Cf. ST I, p. 66.

[5]ST I, p. 204.

[6]ST I, p. 203.

[7]ST I, p. 203.

[8]In an article on nature and sacrament in 1929, Tillich speaks of the account in Genesis of man's fall as something purely mythical. "The myth of Paradise (The Garden of Eden) shows the 'power' of vegetative life, represented by the trees and their significance for Adam." PE, p. 105.

Later, in a small article which appeared in 1931, Tillich gives the same existential symbolic interpretation of original sin which is expanded in Systematic Theology.

"The difficult concept of 'original sin' denotes an original self-contradiction in human existence . . . The fateful character and the guilt of human existence are due rather to the self-assertiveness of the finite being in its pride, concupiscence, and separation from its ground." PE, p. 165.

For him, this is clearly a myth[9] that needs to be "broken." There is, indeed, a special time and place; there are certain individuals--Adam and Eve; and God appears as an individual "as a typical 'father figure.'"[10] The dynamic forces of nature are mythologically expressed by the serpent. In this account of Genesis, Tillich sees a cosmic myth told in psychological language. In an article, "The Problem of the Theological Method," Tillich says: ". . . the theologian cannot escape his philosophical tool."[11] The idealistic philosophy of Professor Tillich is evident here. At the basis of his theory of "dreaming innocence" this distinction between the perfection of man in the essential order and his fallen state in the existential order is his admitted Platonism. On the point of the Fall "the Platonic and the Christian evaluations of existence coincide."[12] The analysis of the existentialist is important in so far as it describes in

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[9]It is interesting to see how much Schelling's idea of myth has influenced Berdyaev and Tillich. Berdyaev, for example, considers the Fall as a myth and he agrees with "the philosophical core of Schelling's teaching on the subject of mythology." Nicolas Berdyaev, Freedom and the Spirit, op. cit., p. 71. According to Berdyaev, Schelling regards mythology "as the pre-history of the human race, and as the reflection of a theogonic and cosmogonic process in the human consciousness." Ibid.

[10]ST II, p. 37.

[11]Tillich, "The Problem of the Theological Method," p. 18.

[12]ST II, p. 23.

strong psychological language what is a matter of universal experience. But the myth of Platonism he finds indispensible to the understanding of the cause of this experience. "The Platonic distinction between the essential and the existential realms is fundamental . . . It lies in the background even of present-day Existentialism."[13]

In this symbol of original sin there is no question of an Adam. In the Protestant Era, Tillich refers to the "myth of Paradise."[14] This symbol means Adam as God conceived him in his Divine Mind.[15] There is no question of a past time--of a "was"--the Fall is not an historical fact; it is rather a trans-historical, transcendent fact which is a symbol of man's estrangement.[16]

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[13]CB, p. 127. [14]PE, p. 105. [15]ST I, p. 259.

[16]There is no question either of angels or demons in the Fall of man. The fall of Lucifer and the angels is but another confusing myth. One could be led to believe by certain references of Professor Tillich that angels were individual, personal, spiritual substances distinct from the Divinity. Cf. ST I, pp. 226-9. In Tillich's terminology "the angels are concrete-poetic symbols of the structures or powers of being. They are not beings but participate in everything that is." ST I, p. 260. "The truth of the doctrine of angelic and demonic powers is that there are supra-individual structures of goodness and supra-individual structures of evil. Angels and demons are mythological names for constructive and destructive powers of being, which are ambiguously interwoven and which fight with each other in the same person, in the same social group, and in the same historical situation. They are not beings but powers of being dependent on the whole structure of existence and involved in the ambiguous life." ST II, p. 40. Cf. NB, p. 54.

Since there is no question of an Adam, there can be no question of Adam's perfection. There is no question, either, of Adam's free-will decision. ". . . the combination of man's predicament with a completely free act by Adam is inconsistent as well as literally absurd."[17] But in Professor Tillich, it is first, the condition of humanity.

Since the present fallen state of man is not the result of one man's free will, it seems that Creation and the Fall are identical. In other words, to be an existing creature is to be a fallen creature. The particular point at which the Fall and Creation are joined is "the most dialectical point in the doctrine of creation."[18] To be a fully developed creature necessarily involves being a fallen creature. As long as man is within the ground of his being, that is, as long as he is in the essential order, he is good. Once he has been launched into existence, he is fallen. Fall and Creation, therefore, are but two aspects of the same reality.[19]

In the interpretation of this symbol of original sin, Tillich speaks about a certain trans-historical activity and experience. In the essential order, man experiences the

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[17] ST II, p. 56. Cf. Ibid., p. 30.

[18] ST I, p. 255. Cf. DF, p. 95.

[19] Cf. ST I, p. 255.

possibility of going into existence. This possibility is called temptation. This temptation, it must be remembered, does not occur in time, nor does it have anything to do with one man's free-will decision. The very transition from essence to existence, that is, the fact of Creation, must be expressed mythologically.[20] "Theology must clearly and unambiguously represent 'the Fall' as a symbol for the human situation universally, not as the story of an event that happened 'once upon a time.'"[21]

The question, however, of the responsibility of this fallen state remains. Tillich has excluded the decision of one man as being responsible. He seems, however, to make all men responsible. He speaks of freedom and guilt and personal responsibility, but the result seems to be that his freedom is identified with faith, destiny and necessity.

> As an individual act, sin is a matter of freedom, responsibility, and personal guilt. But this freedom is imbedded in the universal destiny of estrangement in such a way that in every free act the destiny of estrangement is involved and, vice versa, that the destiny of estrangement is actualized by all free acts. Therefore, it is impossible to separate sin as fact from sin as act. They are interwoven, and their unity is an immediate experience of everyone who feels himself to be guilty. Even if one takes the full responsibility for an act of

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[20] Cf. ST II, p. 37.

[21] ST II, p. 29. Tillich refers to this simply to speak about transition from essence to existence. Cf. ST II, p. 31. Creation is referred to as a "religious--mythical term." PE, p. 217.

> estrangement--as one should--one is aware that this act is dependent on one's whole being, including free acts of the past and the destiny which is one's special, as well as mankind's universal, destiny.[22]

At times there seems to be a clearer denial of individual responsibility for the Fall and, yet, at other times such an individual responsibility is asserted. "The individual act of existential estrangement is not the isolated act of an isolated individual . . ."[23] Christianity, Tillich asserts, "must simultaneously acknowledge the tragic universality of estrangement and man's personal responsibility for it."[24] It seems, however, that man himself is responsible for his existential estrangement. The reason Tillich gives is the fact that man possesses finite freedom. "Man is responsible for the transition from essence to existence because he has finite freedom . . ."[25] This would seem to give man an existential reality in the state of "dreaming innocence." This presumes that man has liberty before he exists; this presupposes that all men must exercise their liberty in the same way. "If estrangement were based only on the responsible decisions of the individual person, each individual could always either contradict or not contradict

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[22] ST II, p. 56.

[23] ST II, p. 38.

[24] ST II, p. 39. "Actualized creation and estranged existence are identical." ST II, p. 44.

[25] ST II, p. 40.

his essential nature."[26] The question, therefore, of responsibility for the Fall is given a "yes" and a "no" answer. Both freedom and destiny are said to be involved in the Fall.

Tillich finds this concept of original sin so confusing that he suggests that the terms "original sin" and "hereditary sin" be removed from the theological vocabulary, difficult as this may be.[27] These terms are too much weighted down "with literalistic absurdities."[28] But Tillich has decided to keep the name and reinterpret the reality in the light of Platonic idealism and modern Existentialism.

Tillich's admiration for Existentialism leads him to discuss original sin in terms of estrangement. "Existence is estrangement . . ."[29] "Existence is separation!"[30] This non-Scriptural word is borrowed from Hegel.[31] The reality, however, Tillich finds in Sacred Scripture in the so-called "myth" of the Fall. The banishment from Paradise, the sin of Abel, the tower of Babel, all of these, according to Tillich express the reality described by Kierkegaard, or Sartre, or by any of the existentialists. Although Tillich

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[26]ST II, p. 41. [27]Cf. ST II, p. 39. [28]ST II, p. 46.

[29]ST II, p. 25. [30]SF, p. 155.

[31]Cf. Tillich, "Estrangement and Reconciliation in Modern Thought," Review of Religion, 9:15-19, November, 1944, p. 11.

likes the word "estrangement," he says that it cannot "replace the word 'sin.'"[32] In the word "sin" there is a personal element, the element of personal decision which must be kept, and that element is lacking in the word "estrangement." Sin expresses a personal "turning away from that to which one belongs."[33] The distinction that Tillich makes between sin and estrangement is that "man's predicament is estrangement, but his estrangement is sin."[34] The traditional original sin symbol must, according to Tillich, be reinterpreted in the light of the existentialistic idea of estrangement.[35] This idea is the result of the "intuitive understanding of the profound complex of modern man."[36] This particular idea is the function of ecstatic reason.

This estrangement has, according to Tillich, three marks: "'unbelief,' 'concupiscence,' and hubris."[37] Each of

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[32]ST II, p. 46. [33]ST II, p. 46. [34]ST II, p. 46.

[35]The traditional distinction between mortal and venial sin is rejected, as is, likewise, the distinction between original sin and actual sin. These distinctions have certain psychological advantages which the proper use of psychiatry and counselling can well realize, just as well as the Catholic priesthood. ". . . 'sin' should never be used in the plural . . ." SF, p. 154. There is no meaning to the division "sinners" and "righteous." All are sinners; all are estranged from God; all are in sin. Sin is estrangement; "sin is separation." SF, p. 154.

[36]Tillich, "Estrangement and Reconciliation in Modern Thought," p. 6.

[37]ST II, p. 47.

these needs rethinking. "Unbelief" would be better termed "unfaith," if such a word existed. Since faith for Tillich does not bear any relation to belief in any dogma or dogmas, so, too, the lack of faith or "unbelief" is not to be understood as the lack of faith in any dogma. "'Unbelief' . . . means the act or state in which man in the totality of his being turns away from God."[38] He is cut off from his ground of being. This act occurs in all men and involves their wills, intellects and emotional lives. Nor is this separation of man's will to be called disobedience, because disobedience means command and law. Anyone who needs a command or a law is said to be already cut off from the ground of his being. Tillich regrets the fact that most Protestant theology has lost sight of this emphasis on "unbelief."

As for the idea of hubris, it means that man makes himself the center of his universe, instead of God. Man refuses to recognize his mortality and his finitude, and when he does this, "he falls into hubris."[39] Tillich sees hubris in the serpent's promise to Eve. It is self-elevation. "Its main symptom is that man does not acknowledge his finitude."[40] This desire to vaunt oneself exists in all

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[38] ST II, p. 47. "The essence of sin is disbelief." BR, p. 55.

[39] ST II, p. 50.

[40] ST II, p. 51.

individuals--all want to be like God. It is reflected, likewise, in the cultural hubris of nations.

As for "concupiscence," it is "the unlimited desire to draw the whole of reality into one's self."[41] This desire affects man's spirit and his body, as is evident from the research of art, literature and philosophy. Nero, Mozart's Don Juan, Goethe's Faust are examples of individuals with this desire to draw all to themselves. The idea of "concupiscence," therefore, should not be restricted to the sense-level--to sex. Tillich thinks that theology can profit from Freud's concept of "libido" to understand concupiscence, but theology must go beyond that concept.[42] Tillich sees in Freud's "libido," in Nietzsche's "will to power," expressions of concupiscence, but they are merely symbols of concupiscence.[43]

What the existentialist philosopher experiences as "estrangement," the theologian calls "original sin." There are many results of this original sin. One very important result is the need of symbols. Man is cut off from the ground of his being. In the state of "dreaming innocence," the state that never existed, man would always see through reality to the ground of being. God would be all in all.

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[41] ST II, p. 52.

[42] Cf. ST II, p. 54.

[43] ST II, p. 55.

Reality would be diaphanous and not opaque as it is today.[44]

In our fallen state revelation accomplishes the task of technical reason in the state of innocence. Revelation reintegrates reason and unites it to the ground of its being.[45]

A corollary of this and another consequence of original sin is the impossibility of the religious experience of one becoming revelatory for another.

> Man's religious experience could become an independent source of systematic theology only if man were united with the source of all religious experience, the Spiritual power in him.[46]

Another consequence of original sin is the fact of death. In a sermon entitled "On the Transitoriness of Life," he speaks of man's need to die, a need which he related to the fall in Paradise.

> No being can acquire Divine eternity. When man tried to become like God--so the Paradise story tells us--by trying to grasp for himself knowledge of all good and evil powers, he achieved that knowledge. But, at the same time, his eyes were opened and he saw his real situation, which had been hidden from him in the dreaming innocence of Paradise.[47]

In the light of this brief resumé of Professor Tillich's interpretation of the symbol, original sin, the following chapter concerning the christological symbols will be more readily understood.

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[44]Cf. ST I, p. 80.

[45]Cf. ST I, p. 94.

[46]ST I, p. 46.

[47]SF, p. 68.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHRISTOLOGICAL SYMBOLS

A detailed analysis of Paul Tillich's christological symbols will reveal two facts: the great importance that Professor Tillich attributes to Christ, and the surprising unimportance of Jesus in the picture. For Tillich, as for all Christians, "the basic attacks on the Christian dogma are implicitly or explicitly on the christological level."[1] It seems, therefore, that the study of the christological symbols of Paul Tillich will make evident his position toward the Christian dogma. How important Christ is to Tillich is brought to light by the fact that the various religions of mankind are said to have their yearnings and questions and strivings all fulfilled and realized in Christ.[2]

The following are but a few citations presented to show the importance of Christ in the thinking of Paul Tillich. Not only is Christ "the center of the history of revelation . . . [but] indirectly the center of all history."[3] And the central theme of systematic theology is none other than "the correlation of existence and the Christ."[4] Not

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[1] ST II, p. 139

[2] Cf. ST I, p. 39

[3] ST I, p. 143.

[4] ST II, p. 19.

only is Christ the center of history, but he is its end and aim. "In the sense of 'aim,' history has come to an intrinsic end qualitatively, namely, in the appearance of the New Being as a historical reality."[5] In Christ, Tillich says "history has received a meaning and a center."[6] A man, likewise, is said to be a theologian precisely in relationship to Christ.

> . . . we are real theologians when we state that Jesus is the Christ, and that it is in Him that the Logos of theology is manifest. . . . For true theological existence is the witnessing to Him Whose yoke is easy and Whose burden is light, to Him Who is the true paradox.[7]

These statements regarding Christ are, for the most part, a corollary of the symbol, the New Being. This particular symbol seems to be the most important of all the Christological symbols and for this reason it will be treated first.

I. THE NEW BEING

Tillich has entitled one of his books The New Being. The term "New Being" is found in sermons and lectures and in other books. This religious symbol is the answer to the question that the preceding chapter describes: the question of man's estrangement--the question posited by the experienced fact of original sin. ". . . the question implied in

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[5] ST II, p. 120. [6] BR, p. 41. [7] SF, p. 129.

man's existential disruption and despair is answered in the symbol of the Christ and his appearance under the conditions of existence. . ."[8] Just as the theological symbols were shown to be the answer to the questions placed by natural theology, that is, by technical reason, so, too, the christological symbols will be seen to be the answer of theology, that is, the answer of ecstatic reason.

The reality that overcomes estrangement is the New Being. "The christological problem started with the quest for the New Being . . ."[9] This New Being is found in Christ and identified with the being of Christ. Tillich finds a biblical expression of this symbol in St. Paul's "new eon." In this symbol, New Being, there

> is the question of a reality in which the self-estrangement of our existence is overcome, a reality of reconciliation and reunion, of creativity, meaning, and hope. We shall call such a reality the "New Being," a term whose presuppositions and implications can be explained only through the whole system.[10]

Tillich claims that in accepting Christ as the New Being, he is but accepting the reality acknowledged by the ancient Christian baptismal confessions. He, therefore, is claiming to be one with tradition.

If I were asked to sum up the Christian message for

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[8]Tillich, "The Problem of the Theological Method," Journal of Religion, 27:25, January, 1947.

[9]ST II, p. 138.

[10]ST I, p. 49.

> our time in two words, I would say with Paul: It is the message of a "New Creation." We have read something of the New Creation in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. Let me repeat one of his sentences in the words of an exact translation: "If anyone is in union with Christ he is a new being; the old state of things has passed away; there is a new state of things."[11]

This particular symbol is the work of ecstatic reason. This symbol was first arrived at by means of an experience. This particular fact will be the reason for the a-conceptual nature of this symbol, the reason, likewise, for its importance and its ultimateness. The first experience of this symbol occurred at Caesarea Philippi. Here "occurred the most important event of human history. . . . the moment in which one man dared to say to another: 'Thou are the Christ.'"[12] It was at Caesarea Philippi that Peter denied that Jesus was a mere prophet, a forerunner, ". . . that somebody else should be expected. He asserted that the decisive thing of history had appeared, and that the Christ, the bearer of the new, had come in this man Jesus."[13] Peter, therefore, experienced the New Being in Christ. Here, for the first time, miracle and ecstasy were conjoined. This experience of Peter, Tillich refers to as an "original revelation."[14] Each Christian must himself undergo a similar experience to the New Being in Christ. This is but a

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[11] NB, p. 15.

[12] SF, p. 142.

[13] SF, pp. 143-4.

[14] ST I, p. 126.

logical conclusion to Tillich's a-conceptual idea of revelation. Because it is a-conceptual, it cannot be passed on; it must be experienced. This experience of other believers, Tillich refers to as "dependent revelation."[15]

By reason of the method of correlation, the meaning of the original revelation and the dependent revelation can differ.

> . . . if one side of a correlation is changed, the whole correlation is transformed. It is true that "Jesus Christ . . . the same yesterday, today, and forever" is the immovable point of reference in all periods of church history. But the act of referring is never the same, since new generations with new potentialities of reception enter the correlation and transform it.[16]

This revelation of the New Being in Christ is going on constantly in every age, in every prayer.[17] Although Peter and the Christian contact the New Being through ecstatic reason in an experience, Professor Tillich insists that this experience does not create its object, but rather finds it. "The New Being is a reality which neither a true philosophical theory nor an authentic religious experience can create."[18] This must be stressed, because experience is the basis for

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[15] ST I, p. 126.

[16] ST I, p. 126.

[17] ST I, p. 127. The Holy Spirit enlightens the twentieth century believer. This enlightenment is called "illumination" by Tillich. The activity of the Holy Spirit at Caesarea Philippi is called "inspiration."

[18] Tillich, "A Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of the Incarnation," Church Quarterly Review, 147:146, January, 1949.

the ultimate and factual side, both of the theological and the christological symbols. Thus Tillich speaks of "the experience of the living God and the experience of the New Being."[19] Without this experience the conceptual aspect, that is, the concrete element of the christological symbols, would be only imagination; they would be mere symbols.

The emphasis on experience is largely due to the influence of the existentialists on Professor Tillich. This he himself acknowledges in an article entitled "Existential Philosophy."[20] The important reality is not essence but existence. This reality is immediately experienced. Not only does this existentialism lie behind the ultimate element of a symbol but will be the reason for the need of concrete symbols. "The existential thinker needs special forms of expression, because personal Existence cannot be expressed in terms of objective experience."[21] Tillich strives to get beyond and under the subject-object relationship to what Jaspers calls the "Source."[22] The New Being, therefore, is the Source of the remaining christological symbols.

It is one thing to say that the New Being is an

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[19]ST II, p. 144.

[20]Tillich, "Existential Philosophy," Journal of the History of Ideas, 5:44-70, January, 1944.

[21]Ibid., p. 55.

[22]Ibid., p. 56.

experienced reality, and another thing to say what this reality is. Tillich tries to give us some information as to the real nature of the New Being. He says that it is "the answer to the questions implied within existence."[23] The question is a question of estrangement; the answer, therefore, is the one without estrangement. It appears (to use Roman Catholic terminology) that the New Being is to be identified with a man created by God in the natural order, a man who has committed no sin. It must be borne in mind that for Tillich the distinction between the natural and the supernatural is meaningless, nor is there, for him, any such reality as sanctifying grace. With these distinctions and denials in mind, the Tillichian description of the New Being does seem to coincide with the observation already made that would identify a perfect natural man with the New Being. Tillich says that the "New Being is essential being under the conditions of existence. . ."[24]

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[23] ST II, p. 27.

[24] ST II, p. 118. Is this not the same position that Friedrich Schleiermacher holds? Schleiermacher speaks of the ideal becoming historical in Christ. Cf. Friedrich Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, trans. H. R. Mackintosh (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928), pp. 377 ff. Compare this, too, with Tillich's: "What we are essentially has appeared in existence, thereby overcoming existence and creating the New Reality, which is not merely something new within existence but the New overcoming existence as a whole." Tillich, "A Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of the Incarnation," p. 147. "The Incarnation is the manifestation of essential

For a better appreciation of just what the New Being in Christ really says it would be well to recall what the characteristics of estrangement are. We saw that estrangement included "hubris," 'concupiscence' and 'unbelief.'"[25] Each of these Tillich finds absent in the New Being. Christ is not estranged from the ground of his being, thus, in him there is no trace of unbelief. At Caesarea Philippi, Christ had the opportunity of manifesting hubris, yet Tillich finds no trace here of self-elevation. As for concupiscence, that, too, is absent, as was evident in the temptations in the desert.[26] This, however, is the negative approach to the nature of the New Being. This merely removes certain defects from Christ as the New Being. The positive approach to the reality of the New Being is analogous to the Tillichian emphasis on the power of being, which we saw in describing the theological symbols, that is, the power to resist nonbeing.

> In an analogous way the term "New Being," when applied to Jesus as the Christ, points to the power in him which conquers existential estrangement or, negatively expressed, to the power of resisting the forces of estrangement. To experience the New Being in Jesus

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God-manhood within existence, and under the conditions of existence, in which it does not lose its essential character. Ibid., p. 141.

[25]Cf. ante, chap. iii.

[26]Cf. ST II, p. 126.

> as the Christ means to experience the power in him which has conquered existential estrangement in himself and in everyone who participates in him.[27]

Tillich not only gives this as his reason for including "being" in the symbol, New Being, but he explains why he uses the word "new."

> The New Being is new in so far as it is the undistorted manifestation of essential being within and under the conditions of existence. It is new in two respects: it is new in contrast to the merely potential character of essential being; and it is new over against the estranged character of existential being.[28]

Another reason is given for the term "new." "The New Being is new in so far as it is the conquest of the situation under the law--which is the old situation."[29] Nor is this description of the New Being falsified by the fact that Tillich identifies the New Being with Paul's "'new creature,'" or with the Pauline expression "'in' Christ."[30] Tillich's interpretation of each of these expressions will be based on the same denial of the supernatural. The New Being is said to be created by the Incarnation and "is above existential being, because it overcomes the cleavage between finiteness and infinity which characterizes existence."[31]

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[27] ST II, p. 125.

[28] ST II, p. 119.

[29] ST II, p. 119.

[30] ST II, p. 119.

[31] Tillich, "A Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of the Incarnation," p. 144.

This "New Being is not something that simply takes the place of the Old Being. But it is a renewal of the Old which has been corrupted. . ."[32] Christ as the New Being ushers in a new eon, a new age. He is, likewise, the ruler of this age. The ruling of this age is symbolized by the expression "ruling of history."[33]

> The symbol of the Christ as Lord of history means neither external interference by a heavenly being nor fulfilment of the New Being in history or its transformation into the Kingdom of God; but it does mean the certainty that nothing can happen in history which would make the work of the New Being impossible.[34]

This aspect of the activity of the New Being brings out the nature of the Tillichian universe--its closed character. Although time and history are said to have their meaning and center in this New Being,[35] the universe itself remains a closed universe, that is, there are no miracles in the traditional sense, nor is there any revelation in the traditional sense of new information. The heavens never open up, God never really speaks to his children. The activity of the New Being, therefore, is said to be found in the future in the sense of reigning in heaven as a "'king of glory.'"[36]

The New Being is said to be operating when the

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[32] NB, p. 20.

[33] ST II, p. 162.

[34] ST II, p. 162.

[35] Cf. SF, p. 37.

[36] SF, p. 144.

psychiatrist or the doctor of medicine heals.[37] When a diplomat effects a reconciliation at the peace-table, then the New Being, likewise, is at work; when the prejudices of racial differences are overcome "there New Creation happens!"[38] The New Being is not limited to Christ. All who participate in Christ are said to "participate in the New Being."[39] This participation in the New Being on the part of the Christian is not achieved by baptism. In fact, in a sermon reprinted in The New Being, Tillich asserts that baptism does not really matter. ". . . baptism is a religious rite, observed by the Christians. All these rites do not matter--only a New Creation."[40] Not only does baptism not matter, but because of this New Being the Christian is freed from the yoke of religion. The yoke that Christ gives is "a 'new being' above religion."[41] The Tillichian participation in the New Being is not by baptism. It is not a participation that effects an ontological change in the participant and it is not a present participation, but rather a

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[37]Christ is referred to as "the healer and savior" in the sense that Christ accomplishes what the psychiatrist and the psychologist attempt to do. NB, p. 45. Cf. PE, p. 106.

[38]NB, p. 23. [39]ST II, p. 118 [40]NB, p. 16.

[41]SF, p. 96. Cf. SF, pp. 99, 101-2.

participation "by anticipation."[42] The Lutheran attitude toward faith is, it seems, evident in Professor Tillich's assertion concerning what must be done to participate in the New Being. "To enter the New Being we do not need to show anything. We must only be open to be grasped by it. . ."[43]

> . . . the Messiah, the Christ, the Man-from-above, the Son of God, the Spirit, the Logos-who-became-Flesh--the New Being. All these terms are symbolic variations of the theme first enunciated by Peter when he said to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ."[44]

It seems that all christological symbols that follow in this chapter are but attempts to conceptualize this symbol, the New Being. It alone seems to be necessary. The rest can come and go, but this symbol is ultimate. "The New Being is not dependent on the special symbols in which it is expressed. It has the power to be free from every form in which it appears."[45] The other symbols stress the concrete element, the element realized by the activity of technical reason. The rest of the symbols are said to be concepts borrowed largely from Greek philosophy by the early Fathers of the Church. They had no choice but to try to express the New Being by means of these, the only concepts that they knew. "Whether or not these concepts were adequate to the interpretation of the Christian message remains a permanent

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[42] ST II, p. 118.

[43] NB, p. 22.

[44] ST I, p. 136.

[45] ST II, p. 165.

question of theology."[46] Tillich asks the question: ". . . how successful was the conceptualization of the symbols expressing the Christian message?"[47] And he answers:

> . . . fairly negatively. The christological dogma saved the church, but with very inadequate conceptual tools.
>
> The inadequacy of the tools is due partly to the inadequacy of every human concept for expressing the message of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ.[48]

This inadequacy of the Greek concepts has inspired Paul Tillich's efforts to rethink and to re-evaluate the christological symbols.

Professor Tillich makes the distinction between the substance of the Christian message and its form. The substance, it seems, is best experienced in the New Being. As a theologian, Professor Tillich is not trying to abandon all philosophical concepts, that would be for theology to destroy itself. "Theology must be free from and for the concepts it uses. It must be free from a confusion of its conceptual form with its substance. . ."[49] That is, the concrete elements of the christological symbol must ever point to the ultimate element but never be identified with it, "and it must be free to express this substance with every tool which proves to be more adequate than those given

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[46] ST II, p. 139.
[47] ST II, p. 140.
[48] ST II, p. 140.
[49] ST II, p. 142.

by ecclesiastical tradition."[50] This, finally, is the attempt of the remaining christological symbols. This will ever be the task of the theologian. The very nature of the concepts makes this task a permanent one.

II. SON OF MAN--MESSIAH

Tillich is often referred to as the leading twentieth-century Protestant exponent of apologetic theology, while Karl Barth is referred to as the outstanding kerygmatic theologian. Tillich himself makes this distinction. This does not deny that he uses the kerygma, but it does point out his existential approach to the Christian message. He does not start with the kerygma, but he starts with the existential questions and then examines the kerygma to see how these questions are answered.[51] It is for this reason that the chapter on original sin precedes this chapter. Nowhere is this apologetic approach more evident and decisive than with regard to these christological symbols. The purpose of this particular approach is an earnest desire to make the Christian message meaningful to the twentieth-century needs. Answers without questions are meaningless. This apologetic approach does not try to discover the answers in the questioning reason. The kerygma is for Tillich, as for Barth,

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[50] ST II, p. 142.

[51] Cf. ST I, pp. 26-7, 60.

something given.

The particular symbols of the Christian kerygma, according to Tillich, existed prior to the Christian era. They grew up in certain religious cultures and in response to definite existential questions. In all of this, Tillich is trying to demonstrate the continuity of history and the fact that history is a preparation for the New Being. Later on, when Christ appeared, these symbols were applied to the New Being. The same symbols were used, but there was a change in their meaning, a transformation took place. There is today a true and a false application of each christological symbol. As long as the symbol refers to the New Being, it is true--it is adequate. Distortion and falsity will be shown to be the result of an identification of the concrete element of the following symbols with the New Being. Distortion will be a consequence of supernaturalism, literalism and pietism.

In the Protestant Era, Tillich speaks of two general ways of symbolizing the meaning of human existence. These two ways will find their application in the christological symbols that immediately follow these general remarks.

> There are two lines by which the meaning of human existence can be symbolized: the vertical and the horizontal, the first one pointing to the eternal meaning as such, the second to the temporal realization of the eternal meaning. Every religion necessarily has both directions, although different religions overemphasize the one or the other. The mystical element which belongs to all religion is symbolized by the vertical line; the active element which also belongs to

all religion is symbolized by the horizontal line.[52] Before entering into an analysis of any particular christological symbol illustrative of this idea of the vertical line and the horizontal line, it would be useful to mention at this point Tillich's attitude toward the Synoptics and toward St. John, for this is but an application of the same attitude toward the vertical and horizontal line.

Although the list of the ancestors of Christ is asserted to be contradictory and questionable, they do possess, for Tillich, a "symbolic value." "These are all symbols of the historical dimension of the past."[53] Christ is a being of history; he does not just appear on the Galilean scene; his coming is prepared. Whether his ancestors really include David or not is not important; David is but a symbol of the past. The Synoptics and John are contrasted. The latter is more interested in the future, the former in the past. However, each gives a different frame of reference and both frames of reference are symbolic. Tillich uses symbolism with reference to the Synoptics and St. John to avoid what he refers to as "literal incompatibility."[54] No one is to interpret the future or the past of Christ literally. "Son of David" and "Son of Man" are both symbols.

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[52] PE, p. 186.

[53] ST II, p. 135.

[54] ST II, p. 138. Cf. ST II, p. 136.

". . . one must distinguish between the symbolic frame in which the picture of Jesus as the Christ appears and the substance in which the power of the New Being is present."[55] There may be a conflict in symbols--Tillich does not deny this--but between the mystic, John, and the Synoptics he finds that the substance is untouched. Christ ever manifests "the undisrupted unity of the center of his being with God . . ."[56] Both the Synoptics and John point to the New Being and that is the essential value of these symbolic frames.

Tillich explains that "the human soul cannot maintain itself without the vertical line, the knowledge of an eternal meaning, however this may be expressed in mythological or theological terms."[57] "The horizontal line becomes empty and distorted if it is not united continuously with the vertical line."[58] What is Tillich's idea behind the meaning of the horizontal and the vertical line in the New Being? The answer to this seems to be that only thus can Christ really be the answer to the universal expectation of mankind voiced throughout the ages in the various ages of the world. Only one or the other line would not suffice to make Christ the universal answer.

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[55] ST II, p. 138.

[56] ST II, p. 138.

[57] PE, p. 187.

[58] PE, p. 189.

> If it claims universality, Christianity implicitly maintains that the different forms in which the quest for the New Being has been made are fulfilled in Jesus as the Christ. Christianity must show--and has always tried to show--that the historical type of the expectation of the New Being embraces itself and the non-historical type. . . Christianity, in order to be universally valid, must unite the horizontal direction of the expectation of the New Being with the vertical one. . . . The figure of the Son of Man combines transcendent roots with historical functions.[59]

In this symbol the horizontal and the vertical element meet. The vertical line is due, according to Tillich, to the Greek influence and the horizontal line reflects rather the Judaic influence.

"The symbol 'Son of Man' . . . designates an original unity between God and man."[60] This is the essence of this symbol. This Son of Man is identified with the Man-from-above referred to by St. Paul in the fifteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians. The pre-Christian Persian symbol of the spiritual man is applied to the symbol, Son of Man. What is immediately aimed at in this symbol is the fact that the man of "dreaming innocence," the essential man, is realized in existence without the estrangement of existence. The Son of Man overcomes the forces of estrangement, in him there is no <u>hubris</u>, no unbelief, no concupiscence. However, this interpretation of the Son of Man does not prevent Tillich from finding in Christ the anxieties of

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[59] <u>ST II</u>, p. 89.

[60] <u>ST II</u>, p. 109.

existence. He is indeed one with himself, the universe and the ground of his being.[61] But that must not be interpreted to include any claim of sinlessness or any lack of error in the New Being.[62]

The function of this symbol is. likewise, to point beyond to the divine power present in this man to bring about the new eon. There is, however, a danger in this symbol, Son of Man. It is the danger of giving a wrong concept of the Incarnation, one that would demand a really pre-existent being who became man.

> The Incarnation is the manifestation of original and essential Godmanhood within and under the conditions of existence. In making this statement, I emphasize once more that it is in line with biblical thought, while the proposition that God became man, or became flesh, is definitely not biblical. The transcendent Son of Man, the heavenly man, the spiritual man, the Logos became an immanent Son of Man, an earthly man, an historical man, flesh.
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> We must begin from this point and translate the mythological, liturgical, and numinous form of these statements into a rational and theological form.[63]

To take the symbol, Son of Man, Man-from-above, literally is "the literalistic distortion of these symbols."[64] When a symbol is taken literally it "becomes an absurd story, and

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[61]Cf. ST I, p. 201.

[62]ST I, p. 201, also ST II, p. 131.

[63]Tillich, "A Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of the Incarnation," p. 139.

[64]ST II, p. 139.

the Christ becomes a half-god, a particular being between God and man."[65] The Tillichian interpretation of the symbol, Son of Man, is the blending "between the Persian symbol of the Original Man and the Paulinian idea of the Spiritual Man."[66] It points to that original pre-historical unity that existed between God and man. This is the paradox of the Incarnation, "the paradox of the essential God-manhood, manifesting itself within and under the conditions of human existence which contradicts original God-manhood."[67]

The symbol, Messiah or Christ, manifests a striking similarity with the symbol, Son of Man; it does in fact but complement that symbol. Before the time of Jesus, the symbol, Messiah, was used in the Old Testament. It "points to the historical-transhistorical figure through whom Jahweh will establish his kingdom in Israel and, through Israel, in the whole world."[68] There is a certain dialectical tension in this Old Testament symbol if one but contrasts its meaning in the prophetic period with its meaning in the apocalyptic period. The first emphasizes the historical, the second the super-historical nature of the Messiah. The cause for this Old Testament symbol was the need for someone to come and

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[65] ST II, p. 109. [66] ST II, p. 109

[67] Tillich, "A Reinterpretation . . .", p. 138.

[68] ST II, p. 110-1.

conquer man's estrangement. The old eon demanded a new eon. That someone was to come to rectify the situation was held not only by the Jews, but by the Persians likewise, and by other religions, too. The disciples of Jesus then came and they applied this symbol to Jesus. This constitutes the Christian paradox. Despite the Cross and its failure, Jesus is called the Messiah. Obviously, the old symbol undergoes a radical transformation--a transformation that modern Judaism does not accept, and therefore still seeks for its Messiah.

Tillich justifies the symbol, Messiah, as applied to Jesus, because it is he who brings us the New Being. In so far as that is the intention of this symbol, it is said to be adequate and truthful. It brings out the reality that is in Jesus. This symbol stresses the historical and temporal character of the New Being. He is the King, the Anointed One, who will bring peace and prosperity. He will transform historical existence; his reign is not extra-temporal. He is the Messiah, the King who conquers the demonic powers and thus establishes a new eon.[69] This Messiah symbol of an historical character is easily amalgamated with other symbols, such as, the Son of Man, Man-from-above. This union of the two symbols insures the universality of the Christian

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[69]Cf. ST II, p. 27.

claim.[70] This symbol answers the temporal or horizontal expectation, while Son of Man answers the super-temporal or vertical expectation.

The symbol, Messiah, is easily subject to distortion. This readily happens, according to Tillich, when the symbol is identified with Jesus. This, once again, is the reason why Tillich never says Jesus Christ--it is ever Jesus who is the Christ, Jesus who is the Messiah. The Messiah must not be identified with Jesus, the historical object of technical reason, but with the New Being, the object of faith and ecstatic reason.

III. THE LOGOS

There is a certain overlapping of meaning in the two symbols, the Logos and the Word of God, but since they are not identical it will be of profit, first, to examine them apart and then in relationship to one another. The Christian symbol of the Logos has its origin, according to Tillich, in the Greek philosophers, Heraclitus and Parmenides, and only

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[70] When the symbol of the Second Coming is applied to the Messiah, it but points out the fact that Christ is the center of history and that he will not be surpassed. The future, consequently, will not bring one greater than Christ. There will be future revelations, yet they will not surpass the revelation of the New Being in Christ. Cf. ST II, p. 163. This Second Coming symbol that is applied to the Messiah, therefore denies the Jewish expectation.

later does it become an important part of Stoic philosophy. For Heraclitus, the logos meant "word," and the meaning in a word, and the reasonable structure of reality toward which the word pointed. For Parmenides, it pointed out that where there is being, there is also the logos of being. For the Stoics, it is the divine power which is present in everything that exists. This power is identified with the law of nature. The logos is the principle according to which natural things move. Later on, this logos is identified with the reason of the wise man which is but a participation in the eternal Logos.

The logos-doctrine is said to be taken over by Philo of Alexandria. For Philo it represented the universal principle of the divine self-manifestation. This concept, logos, Tillich considers to be the most important for the development of theology. It is called a conceptual symbol because the logos, as conceived by Stoicism, unites cosmological and religious elements; it unites rational structure and creative power.[71] In the Protestant Era, Tillich seems to identify the logos with the idea of truth--the truth both in being and in the mind. He speaks of "obedience to reason, i. e., to the 'logos' immanent in reality and mind."[72]

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[71] ST II, p. 111.

[72] PE, p. 44.

This particular symbol, as well as the rest of the symbols, is said to have its existential background. In other words, this symbol grew out of an existential predicament. It is an answer to that question, which according to Tillich, Heraclitus experienced when he witnessed the "foolishness of the people and the disorder in society."[73] Afterwards the Stoics found this logos concept of Heraclitus useful to show "the unbridgeable gap between the wise one who participates in the Logos and the mass of fools who are separated from, but try to come nearer to, the Logos."[74] In this interpretation Tillich is but showing the existential relationship between question and answer. Each culture will place the question a little differently. Philo's need is said to be "the unapproachable mystery of God which demands a mediating principle between God and man and drives him to his Logos doctrine."[75]

Christianity arrives, takes this symbol and applies it to Christ. The Logos now appears in history in a personal existence. ". . . the Christology of the early church became Logos-Christology."[76] Of all the concepts available, the concept of the Logos is said to have been the best since it "is a conceptual symbol having both religious and

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[73] ST II, p. 112.

[74] ST II, p. 112.

[75] ST II, p. 112.

[76] ST II, p. 139.

philosophical roots."[77] Christianity has changed the Logos doctrine of the philosopher. "The conceptual symbol of the Logos is received and transformed by Christianity."[78] Even today the philosopher as well as the theologian is interested with Logos. They, however, approach the Logos differently. The philosopher is detached and disinterested; the theologian is engaged existentially--he contacts the Logos in a person, the Logos-become-Flesh. It is through the church, through tradition, through the Scriptures, that the theologian contacts the Logos.[79] This Logos, it must be noted, is never spoken of as a divine Person, it "is the logos of being, manifest in Jesus as the Christ."[80] The words "manifest" and "manifestation" are important. The Logos is manifest in Christ; Christ is not the Logos.

The advantage, of course, in the Logos doctrine for Christianity is that the Logos appeared in a person. It is this that makes Christianity superior to all other

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[77] ST II, p. 139.

[78] ST II, p. 112. The very concept of Christian philosophy Tillich finds unacceptable. "The fact that every modern philosophy has grown on Christian soil and shows traces of the Christian culture in which it lives has nothing to do with the self-contradicting ideal of a 'Christian philosophy.' . . . No philosophy which is obedient to the universal logos can contradict the concrete logos, the Logos 'who became flesh.'" ST I, p. 28.

[79] ST I, pp. 23-4.

[80] ST I, p. 64. Cf. ST I, pp. 74 ff.

theologies--mystical and mythical. The concrete and the universal elements of religion are united in one personal life.

> The Christian claim that the logos who has become concrete in Jesus as the Christ is at the same time the universal logos includes the claim that wherever the logos is at work it agrees with the Christian message.[81]

The concrete element of this Logos symbol is able to win man's existential concern. The universal element relates man to the unconditional and to the infinite. The Logos, however, is not to be identified with the abyss, with the ultimate, but it is the abyss that contains the Logos. The logos "is first of all the principle of the divine self-manifestation in the ground of being itself."[82] Other theologies can be very concrete but they lack universality. Mystical theologies, on the other hand, can be universal, but they lack the necessary element of concreteness. There is, according to Tillich, in this union of the concrete and the universal in the Christian Logos, a paradoxical element.[83] This identity of "the absolutely concrete" and "the absolutely universal" is said to be the meaning of the Logos doctrine. ". . . it is the only possible foundation of a Christian theology which claims to be the theology."[84] The wise man of the Stoics has become the Logos manifested in

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[81] ST I, p. 28

[82] ST I, p. 157.

[83] Cf. ST I, p. 287.

[84] ST I, p. 17.

the New Being.

In The Protestant Era, Tillich (having spoken of the identification of the universal reason and Logos) goes on to say that

> the use of the same word [logos] in the Fourth Gospel for the character of Christ shows better than anything else the turn from the nonhistorical to the historical interpretation of reality. The logos becomes history, a visible and touchable individuality, in a unique moment of time.[85]

This unique moment of time Tillich calls the "kairos."

> Thus there can be a "fullness of time," a moment in history when history by means of preliminary procedures has become capable of realizing the ultimate--a moment when history has become ripe for the event, which does not originate from history and also is not injected into it as a foreign substance, but breaks out within it and is capable of being received in history.[86]

The notion of kairos is intimately connected with the idea of Logos. Tillich attempts to find the meaningfulness of history and this search leads him to the Logos symbol.

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[85] PE, p. 30. The nonhistorical interpretation was that of Heraclitus.

[86] Tillich, "What is Wrong with Dialectical Theology?", Journal of Religion, 15:138, April, 1935. The notion of kairos, so essential to the philosophy of history of Tillich, appears in his earliest writings. (As early as 1922, Tillich wrote an article entitled "Kairos." Cf. "Kairos," Die Tat, 14:330-350, 1922.) It is used to describe the moment in which the eternal breaks into the temporal. Although Tillich refers to Christ as the unique Kairos, he does not deny that there can be a dependent kairos which creates a center of lesser importance than the unique Kairos. Cf. PE, ch. iii.

The notion of kairos is an answer to the demands of the Protestant principle. Cf. PE, xix-xx.

Through "the depth of the unconditional,"[87] he finds the "logos-element in the unconditional."[88] The kairos, then, is said to be an outstanding moment in the temporal process, to surrender "itself to become a vehicle for the unconditional."[89] It is "a moment in which the eternal breaks into the temporal . . ."[90] The moment in which "the eternal judges and transforms the temporal."[91] This moment is identified by Tillich with the Incarnation when the Logos became Flesh. In Christ, the unique kairos, history finds its center, that is, in the sense that this kairos sheds the light of meaningfulness on the whole of history. There can, however, be other kairoi but

> kairos in its <u>unique</u> and universal sense is, for Christian faith, the appearing of Jesus as the Christ. Kairos in its <u>general</u> and special sense for the philosopher of history is every turning-point in history in which the eternal judges and transforms the temporal.[92]

The Logos symbol justifies the statement that the appearance of Christ constitutes the unique kairos.

This Logos symbol is conceptual and is the work of technical reason, but the idea of kairos--the moment in which the Logos appears--is a-conceptual and is the work of ecstatic reason. That this is true is evident from the fact that the awareness of the kairos is the result of an

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[87] <u>PE</u>, p. 32. [88] <u>PE</u>, p. 45. [89] <u>PE</u>, p. 42.
[90] <u>PE</u>, p. 45. [91] <u>PE</u>, p. 47. [92] <u>PE</u>, pp. 46-7.

experience. ". . . the consciousness of the kairos is dependent on one's being inwardly grasped by the fate and destiny of the time . . . it cannot be demonstrated . . . it is deed and freedom . . ."[93] The appearance of the Logos in Christ constitutes the unique kairos, yet, "what happened in the one unique kairos, the appearance of Jesus as the Christ, i.e., as the center of history, may happen in a derived form again and again . . ." thus creating minor centers of importance.[94] Does this mean that Logos is manifest to a lesser degree in other beings? It is not clear just what Professor Tillich means by these lesser kairoi. The important point is the Logos appeared in the fullness of time, and that moment of time constitutes the unique kairos.

Despite the place that the Logos doctrine has in christology, it is not considered to be an indispensible symbol. Tillich asserts that it can be replaced.[95] There are certain possible misconceptions of this symbol that make it dangerous.

> The Logos universal and the Logos as the power of a personal life are one and the same Logos. . . . The universal Logos appears in a concrete form.[96]

This language may seem to show a dependence on the Fourth Gospel and to express the idea of the Incarnation, but

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[93] PE, p. 48.

[94] PE, xix.

[95] Cf. ST II, p. 122.

[96] BR, pp. 75-6.

such a literalistic, supernatural interpretation Tillich rejects as a dangerous falsification of the symbol.

> To say that Jesus as the Christ is the concrete place where the Logos becomes visible is an assertion of faith and can be made only by him who is grasped by the Christ as the manifestation of his ultimate concern. But it is not an assertion which contradicts or is strange to the search for ultimate reality. The name "Jesus the Christ" implies an ontology.[97]

Wherever there is a question of interpreting the Logos of the Fourth Gospel as a divine person, then Tillich insists on the need of "re-mythologization" of this conceptual symbol.[98] This Logos is not a divine person.

> The paradox of the Incarnation is not that God becomes man, but that a divine being who represents God and is able to reveal him in his fullness, manifests himself in a form of existence which is in radical contradiction to his divine, spiritual and heavenly form. It is not the unity of the infinite and the finite which constitutes the paradox of the Incarnation, but the manifestation of the original, heavenly man as existential man.[99]

To make the Logos a divine person is an absurdity. "Philosophical theology is and must be logos-theology, while an exclusively kerygmatic theology, like that of Barth, denies

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[97] BR, p. 76.

[98] ST II, p. 112. The Logos doctrine of St. John, according to Bultmann, is the "Gnostic Redeemer-myth" adapted to Christianity. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, trans. Kendrich Grobel (London: S.C.M. Press, 1955), II, 12.

[99] Tillich, "A Reinterpretation . . .," p. 137.

the logos-doctrine."[100] The real meaning of this symbol in Tillich becomes clearer as he rejects the identity of the Logos in the person of Jesus and then finds the symbol expressed in such modern philosophers as Hegel, Fichte, Spinoza and in the mystics of India. "In all these men, especially in Marx, the question of the place in which the logos of being appears is taken seriously."[101] It is the function of the philosophical theologian "to show that Jesus as the Christ is the Logos."[102] Tillich says that "the boundary line between philosophy and theology is the center of my thought and work."[103]

Tillich asks the question whether there is a "necessary conflict between the universal Logos and the Logos who is present in the personal life of Jesus as the Christ?"[104] In his answer the rejection of St. John's position is evident. The universal Logos of the philosopher and the Logos-made-Flesh are one, but neither are persons. "The Logos (i.e., the divine self-manifestation) is actively present in everything that exists, because everything is made through it."[105] Christ is worthy of the Logos symbol because the

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[100]Tillich, "Philosophy and Theology," Religion in Life, 10:28, Winter, 1941.

[101]PE, p. 91. [102]PE, p. 92. [103]PE, p. 83.

[104]BR, p. 75. [105]BR, p. 75.

eternal God-manhood, the essential man, the man of "dreaming innocence," is the perfect manifestation of the philosopher's logos, that is, the universal Logos which is (to put it in another term) the intelligibility in reality--the intelligible structure of reality.

A further confirmation of this non-personal meaning of the Logos symbol is evident from what Tillich says about the symbol, "Lord." "'Lord' is . . . a symbol representing the Logos of being, the structure of reality, which in man's existential estrangement appears as the divine law and the expression of the divine will."[106]

IV. THE WORD OF GOD

Today, largely due to the theology of Karl Barth, there is much discussion of the theology of the "Word." "The knowledge of God cannot be described except through a semantic analysis of the symbolic word."[107] It must be stressed that Tillich does not hold the Barthian position concerning the Word of God. The symbol, Word of God, has a much wider application in the apologetic theology of Paul Tillich. It was in 1929 that Tillich presented his symbolic interpretation of the "Word of God." Systematic Theology was only to develop and not change

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[106] ST I, p. 287.

[107] Ibid., p. 122.

this symbolism.[108] He lists six different uses of this symbol. Just as in the symbol, Logos, so here, too, the idea of manifestation is capital. It will be a question of a manifestation in God or outside of God--in the abyss or in creation. This idea of manifestation gives the key to the understanding of these six descriptions of the Word of God. Tillich says: "The symbols 'Word of God' and 'Logos' cannot be understood in their various meanings without an insight into the general nature of the word."[109] The following six expressions summarize the various nuances that Tillich gives to the meaning of the Word.

> The first meaning of the Word is that it is
>
> the principle of the divine self-manifestation in the ground of being itself. The ground is not only an abyss in which every form disappears; it also is the source from which every form emerges. The ground of

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[108]"For Christian theology Jesus as the Christ is the Word (i.e., the divine self-manifestation); and this involves his being in its totality, to which his deeds and his suffering belong, and not his words alone. 'Word of God' in Christian theology, therefore, has an obviously symbolic sense." PE, p. 211.

"'Word of God' is an ambiguous term. It is often used in the sense of the written word of the Bible. But no biblical word is the word of God for us so long as we have to give up our historical reality in order to understand it. Not even the biblical word can reach us religiously if it does not become contemporaneous. The 'Word of God' is every reality through which the ultimate power breaks into our present reality, a person (e.g., the Christ), a thing (e.g., a sacramental object), a written text (e.g., the Bible), a spoken word (e.g., a sermon)." PE, p. 81.

[109]ST I, p. 122.

> being has the character of self-manifestation; it has logos character. This is not something added to the divine life; it is the divine life itself. In spite of its abysmal character the ground of being is "logical"; it includes its own logos.[110]

"In the logos God speaks his 'word,' both in himself and beyond himself."[111] It is evident how closely associated the two symbols, the Logos and the Word of God are in a systematic theology.

Secondly, the Word is said to be the medium of creation--the dynamic intermediary between the ground of being and the concrete existing individuals. This particular use of the Word is a symbolic expression of the freedom involved in the idea of creation itself.

The third meaning of the Word is the manifestation of the divine in the history of revelation. This manifestation is found in the history of various religions. It is not to be confined to the Old and New Testament events. Even literally, those in the revelatory situation--those praying or listening to a sermon--are said to receive the Word. The Word here has Logos character. It is not, however, to be conceptualized. The Word is grasped by ecstatic reason.[112] The Word as a medium of revelation does not give information. "There are no revealed doctrines, but there are revelatory

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[110] ST I, pp. 157-8

[111] ST I, p. 251.

[112] Cf. ST I, pp. 157-9.

events and situations which can be described in doctrinal terms."[113]

The fourth use of this symbol is identified with the manifestation of the divine life in the New Being that constitutes final revelation. The Word, therefore, is not to be identified with the doctrines of Jesus but with the Being of the Christ. "If Jesus as the Christ is called the Logos, Logos points to a revelatory reality, not to revelatory words."[114]

Fifthly, this symbol is used to refer to the document that contains and expresses the New Being or prepares for the coming of the New Being. This particular usage of the term is valid, according to Tillich, but dangerous. The danger lies in claiming that the Bible is an infallible document. It is the Word of God only in so far as it presents us with the account of the manifestation of the Logos, the Word-made-Flesh.

The message of the church is said to be the sixth usage of the symbol, the Word. But this is true only in so far as one experiences the Word through words of the sermons of the ministry. It is not adequate as a true symbol if it presents certain dogmas as the Word of God. That would be to identify the ultimate and the concrete element of the

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[113] ST I, p. 125.

[114] ST I, p. 157.

symbol, Word of God. Only the existential participation of ecstatic reason can realize this application of the Word to the Christian message.

Tillich distinguishes between the expressive and the denotative functions of the Word. This distinction helps, not only to understand the symbol, Word of God, but aids at the same time in understanding the general theory of symbolism in Tillich. "The denotative power of language is its ability to grasp and communicate general meanings."[115] This is primarily the area of technical reason; this is the language of science and philosophy; here concepts are necessary. "The expressive power of language is its ability to disclose and to communicate personal states."[116] This is the area of ecstatic reason. This is the language of both poetry and revelation, here it is the event--the experienced deed--that matters, not the conceptualization of the deed. In a symbol there are these two elements--the denotative and the expressive. One must never stop at the denotative.

> The word as a medium of revelation points beyond its ordinary sense both in denotation and in expression. In the situation of revelation, language has a denotative power which points through the ordinary meanings of the words to their relation to us. In the situation of revelation, language has an expressive power which points through the ordinary expressive

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[115] ST I, p. 123.

[116] ST I, p. 123.

> possibilities of language to the unexpressible and its relation to us.[117]

Language through which the unconditioned is expressed is truly the Word of God. The Word of God is spoken of as "transparent language. Something shines (more precisely, sounds) through ordinary language which is the self-manifestation of the depth of being and meaning."[118] This same idea is expressed in a sermon in The New Being. Man is said to be a man

> because he is able to receive a word from the dimension of the eternal.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> There is always a word from the Lord, a word that has been spoken.[119]

It seems in this sermon that Tillich combines several meanings of the word.

> The Christian Church believes that this word has a central content, and that it has the name Jesus the Christ. Therefore, the Church calls not His words but His Being the Word of God. The Church believes that in His Being, the eternal has broken into the temporal in a way which once for all gives us a word, nay, the word from the Lord.[120]

Here the ideas of the unique kairos are joined to the symbols, Logos and Word of God. To give the Tillichian expression of the Incarnation: the Word is not so much to be heard as to be seen and touched.

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[117] ST I, pp. 123-4.

[118] ST I, p. 124.

[119] NB, p. 121.

[120] NB, pp. 121-2.

This emphasis on the experience, rather than on the conceptual content, is not surprising from one who admits taking the existentialist approach to reality. Commenting on an often-quoted proposition of Sartre, Tillich gives us a clue to his own preference for the a-conceptual and the existential.

> . . . "the essence of man is his existence." This sentence is like a flash of light which illuminates the whole Existentialist scene. One could call it the most despairing and the most courageous sentence in all Existentialist literature. What it says is that there is no essential nature of man, except in the one point that he can make of himself what he wants. Man creates what he is. Nothing is given to him to determine his creativity. The essence of his being--the "should-be," "the ought-to-be,"--is not something which he finds; he makes it. Man is what he makes of himself. And the courage to be as oneself is the courage to make of oneself what one wants to be.[121]

V. CRUCIFIXION

The symbol of the Cross is the central symbol of the divine manifestation and the "heart of the Christian message."[122] Its importance in Tillichian symbolism cannot be overestimated. The history of the Passion is called "the most important part of the whole Gospel."[123] There simply would be no New Being without the Cross.

Only by taking suffering and death upon himself

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[121] CB, pp. 149-50

[122] SF, p. 141.

[123] SF, p. 146.

> could Jesus be the Christ, because only in this way could he participate completely in existence and conquer every force of estrangement which tried to dissolve his unity with God.[124]

Tillich makes this comment in reference to the sufferings of Christ as one of the expressions of the New Being. He has already pointed out that the New Being was manifest both in the words and deeds of Christ. Tillich avows that his whole christology is dependent on the symbol of the Cross.

> My Christology and Dogmatics were determined by the interpretation of the cross of Christ as the event of history, in which this divine judgment over the world became concrete and manifest.[125]

It was not Caesarea Philippi, but Calvary, that fully revealed the New Being. Tillich makes clear that this is his position in a sermon, "He Who is the Christ." In this sermon he says that Peter's "ecstatic exclamation" of faith made at Caesarea Philippi was but a preparatory faith which was to be negated by the Crucifixion.

> The moment in which Peter called Him the Christ, Jesus prophesied His suffering and death. . . . He was to be the Christ only as a suffering and dying Christ. Only as such <u>is</u> He the Christ . . .[126]

At the time that Peter said to Jesus: "Thou art the Christ," Peter was expecting a New Being, a new state of reality. The Crucifixion later on was to have the effect of

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[124] <u>ST II</u>, p. 123.

[125] <u>IH</u>, p. 32.

[126] <u>SF</u>, pp. 145-6.

disillusioning him and was to lead him to find the New Being in the Crucified.

> The state of things, of nature as well as of history, remained unchanged, and he who was supposed to bring the new eon was destroyed by the powers of the old eon. This meant that the disciples either had to accept the breakdown of their hope or radically transform its content. They were able to choose the second way by identifying the New Being with the being of Jesus, the sacrificed.[127]

The symbol of the Cross is two-fold, in that it contains both the symbolic element and the reality. The symbolic element is experienced; it is the result of faith; here there is certitude. The reality, that is, the deed, belongs to the realm of history--the area of technical reason--and remains therefore only probable. The important point is to realize the two-fold character of the Cross, as fact and as symbol. Tillich as a theologian is primarily interested in the function of the Cross as a symbol, which forms a part of the Christian myth.[128]

> It is the myth of the bearer of the new eon who suffers the death of a convict and slave under the powers of that old eon which he is to conquer. This Cross, whatever the historical circumstances may

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[127] ST II, p. 118.

[128] In an article "The Idea and the Ideal of Personality," written in 1929 (first published in Religiose Vervirklichung), there is the same identity of symbol and myth. "The experience of the ultimate power and meaning of the personal is expressed in myth and dogma whenever they symbolize the unconditional, the ground and abyss of all beings, in personalistic terms." PE, p. 119.

have been, is a symbol based on a fact.[129]

Tillich says that the only factual element in the history of the Passion and the Cross having the immediate certainty of faith "is the surrender of him who is called the Christ to the ultimate consequence of existence, namely, death under the conditions of estrangement."[130]

In the Cross of Christ the divine participation in existential estrangement is said to become manifest.[131] It is not so much Christ who participates in existential estrangement, but God in Christ, who shares man's estrangement.[132] Tillich insists that here, in the symbol of the Cross, there is not simply the question of God's participation in man's estrangement becoming known, but this symbol points out that something actually happens in this manifestation.

> It is not the only actualization, but it is the central one, the criterion of all other manifestations of God's participation in the suffering of the world. The guilty conscience which looks at the Cross sees God's atoning act <u>in</u> it and <u>through</u> it, namely his taking the destructive consequences of estrangement upon himself.[133]

The faithful may not make a distinction between these two terms: "in the Cross" and "through the Cross," nor may the

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[129] <u>ST II</u>, pp. 153-4.

[130] <u>ST II</u>, p. 155.

[131] <u>ST II</u>, p. 175.

[132] <u>Infra</u>, pp. 191-207 for the Tillichian meaning of this expression "God in Christ."

[133] <u>ST II</u>, p. 175.

liturgy as it often does when it speaks of the Precious Blood and Christ's innocent suffering. Tillich insists that theology must not confuse the two expressions.

> The Cross is not the cause but the effective manifestation of God's taking the consequences of human guilt upon himself. And, since the atoning process includes the subjective side, namely, the experience of man that God is eternally reconciled, one can say that atonement is actualized through the Cross.[134]

The symbol of the Cross must not be considered an arbitrary symbol. It is necessary and it stands for a new relation between God and man. "This is not an arbitrary . . . allegory, once the equation 'Jesus is the Christ' is accepted."[135] This symbol makes sense, only in the context of the Old and the New Testament; only there, according to Tillich, can this symbol of the Cross become the central symbol. "To sever it from these connections and to make it directly 'an experience of the unconditioned' is meaningless."[136] It is an experience of the unconditioned but an experience that finds and does not create its object. Tillich distinguishes the two elements in this symbol of the Cross, elements that permit him to differentiate between the contribution of technical reason and the content of ecstatic reason.

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[134] ST II, p. 176.

[135] Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge . . .," p. 205.

[136] Ibid.

> The rational interpretations of this symbol [Cross of Christ] vary--even in the same apostle or theologian; but the symbolic power of the picture itself is not dependent on a special interpretation as long as the interpretation is not a negation of the symbol as such.[137]

In another article, "The Religious Symbol," Tillich points out that there are various depths to the symbol and in this particular passage he brings out what for him is the ultimate depth and meaning of the symbol of the Cross.

> Devotion to the crucifix is really directed to the crucifixion on Golgotha and devotion to the latter is in reality intended for the redemptive action of God, which is itself a symbolic expression for an experience of the unconditioned transcendence.[138]

This is the a-conceptual, experienced and ultimate element of every symbol.

Tillich finds that the ambiguities of dialectical theology are resolved in the symbol of the Cross. Other truths can be expressed in a Yes or a No; Yes alone is to be avoided; it is absolutism--it is the Yes of infallibility. Therefore, Tillich rejects the Yes alone, for he is ever conscious of the No of doubt and despair and meaninglessness. No alone is likewise to be rejected; this would lead to agnosticism, scepticism and, finally, to despair.

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[137]Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge . . .," p. 205. Here Tillich is quite clearly referring to the conceptual or concrete element of this symbol.

[138]Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 13.

In a sermon entitled "Yes and No," Tillich gives his interpretation of the two central symbols, the Cross and the Resurrection. What he has to say concerning the symbol of the Crucifixion is particularly important.

> There is only one reality where there is not Yes and No but only Yes: Jesus as the Christ. First He also stands under the No, as completely as a being can stand; this is the meaning of the Cross. Everything of Him which is only the expression of a finite life or a finite truth stands with all life and all truth under the No. Therefore, we are not asked to accept Him as the unquestionable teacher or as the always fitting example . . .[139]

This symbol, therefore, is the perfect expression of the Protestant principle. Here nothing finite claims to be infinite, nothing conditional claims to be unconditional; here, however, in the symbol of the Cross the infinite and the unconditional shine through and are manifest in Christ.

This suffering of the Cross was "humanly unintelligible, divinely necessary."[140]

> The Christ had to suffer and die, because whenever the Divine appears in all Its depth, It cannot be endured by men. It must be pushed away by the political powers, the religious authorities, and the bearers of cultural tradition. In the picture of the Crucified, we look at the rejection of the Divine by humanity. We see that, in this rejection, not the lowest, but the highest representatives of mankind are judged. Whenever the Divine appears, It is a radical attack on everything that is good in man, and therefore man must repel It, must push It away, must crucify It. Whenever the Divine manifests Itself as the new reality, It must be rejected by the representatives of the old reality.[141]

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[139] NB, p. 103. [140] SF., p. 146. [141] SF, p. 147.

There are other symbols that point to this central symbol of the Cross and that shed light upon it, for example, Christ's subjection is, according to Tillich, symbolically expressed by St. Paul in the second chapter of the Philippians. In order to express this subjection, St. Paul resorts to a myth, the idea of a pre-existent divine Being who "empties" himself and takes on the form of a servant and is obedient even to death--the death on the Cross. This account of St. Paul, if taken symbolically, confirms the central symbol of the Cross. Likewise, Tillich claims that the account of the Birth of Christ in Bethlehem and the Flight into Egypt are both legends, and as legends they serve to express this same idea of subjection that is represented in the Cross symbol. There are other biblical descriptions which Tillich examines in which he finds the loneliness of the Messiah symbolically expressed, for example, the temptations of Christ and his Agony in the Garden. These are said to have little value in themselves; their value is rather in their relationship to the symbol of the Cross. In the Cross, they find their meaning and value.

> Whether these expressions are mythical, legendary, historical, or mixtures of all of them, they as well as the Cross, for which they are supporting symbols, are not important in themselves in the context of the biblical picture. They are important in their power to show the subjection of him who is the bearer of the New Being to the destructive structures of the old being. They are symbols of the divine paradox of the appearance of the eternal God-man unity within

existential estrangement.[142]

Because of the symbol of the Cross, Tillich asserts that Christianity is the final revelation and universally valid.[143] Christ is the medium of final revelation in sacrificing all that is said of Jesus so that the divinity is manifest through the Christ. "Only as the crucified is he 'grace and truth' and not law."[144] But even here, Tillich makes a distinction: Christianity is final and it is not final. The ultimate synthesis will not be perfectly realized in time.

> Christianity, without being final itself, witnesses to the final revelation. Christianity as Christianity is neither final nor universal. But that to which it witnesses is final and universal. This profound dialectics of Christianity must not be forgotten in favor of ecclesiastical or orthodox self-affirmations. Against them the so-called liberal theology is right in denying that one religion can claim finality, or even superiority. A Christianity which does not assert that Jesus of Nazareth is sacrified to Jesus as the Christ is just one more religion among many others. It has no justifiable claim to finality.[145]

The final revelation, the revelation in Jesus as the Christ, is universally valid, because it includes the criterion of every revelation and is the _finis_ or _telos_ (intrinsic aim) of all of them. The final revelation is the criterion of every revelation which precedes or follows. It is the criterion of every religion and of every culture, not only of the culture and religion in and through which it has appeared. It is valid for the social existence of every human group and for the personal existence of every human individual. It is valid

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[142] _ST_ II, p. 159.

[143] Cf. _ST_ I, p. 137.

[144] _ST_ I, p. 134.

[145] _ST_ I, pp. 134-5.

> for mankind as such, and, in an indescribable way, it has meaning for the universe also. Nothing less than this should be asserted by Christian theology. If some element is cut off from the universal validity of the message of Jesus as the Christ, if he is put into the sphere of personal achievement only, or into the sphere of history only, he is less than the final revelation and is neither the Christ nor the New Being. But Christian theology affirms that he is all this because he stands the double test of finality: uninterrupted unity with the ground of his being and the continuous sacrifice of himself as Jesus to himself as the Christ.[146]

There is a danger of confusing the content of revelation with a medium, even if that medium be the Crucified.[147] Speaking of the various expressions of revelation, Tillich affirms that "none of these expressions of the experience of the final revelation is final and absolute in itself. They are all conditioned, relative, open to change and additions."[148] The experience of which Tillich speaks is the experience of the New Being in the Crucified.

> Receiving revelation is <u>revelation</u>, although the Spirit through whom the revelation occurs is always the Spirit of Jesus as the Christ. The Christian church takes the "risk of faith" in affirming practically and theoretically that this revelation cannot come to an end, that it has the power of reformation within itself, and that no new original revelation could surpass the event of final revelation. On the basis of this faith Christianity asserts that the history of original revelation is finished in principle, although it may still continue indefinitely in places where the center of the history of revelation has not yet been acknowledged. But if the final revelation has been accepted, the revelatory process has not

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[146] <u>ST</u> I, p. 137.

[147] Cf. <u>ST</u> I, p. 143.

[148] <u>ST</u> I, p. 151.

stopped; it continues to the end of history.[149]

A further corollary of this symbol of the Cross is Tillich's attitude toward Jesus.[150] Because of the particular Tillichian interpretation of this symbol, Tillich avoids what he refers to as "Jesusology." He is freed from Jesus' ethics.[151] Christ for him is not a teacher; he is not an infallible guide; he is a deed that is experienced.

VI. RESURRECTION

The two symbols, Crucifixion and Resurrection, are said to be interdependent; ". . . they cannot be separated without losing their meaning."[152] Just as in the Crucifixion there was the combination of reality and symbol, so here too. There was, indeed, something that occurred in

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[149] ST I, p. 144.

[150] Many Roman Catholics may think this position of Tillich singular. The fact is that it is widely held among certain liberal Protestants. For example, Allan D. Galloway also speaks of the Crucifixion in which Jesus sacrifices the Jesus. Galloway refers to this as "the overcoming of the 'It' in Christ. In Christ we encounter the absolute Meaning which is the ground of every special intrinsic meaning. This cannot be explained, for that would be to subject it to objectifying thought, and to try to comprehend intrinsic meaning within the thought of 'It.' We cannot comprehend Jesus as the Christ. We can only encounter Him, and encountering Him thus we encounter Him as the 'Thou' . . ." Allan D. Galloway, The Cosmic Christ, (London: Nisbet & Co., 1951), p. 248.

[151] ST I, p. 134.

[152] ST II, p. 153.

existence; otherwise, instead of being a symbol the Resurrection would be an arbitrary sign, but it is the "central Christian symbol."[153] However, the ecstatic element is more in evidence in the Resurrection symbol than in that of the Crucifixion, since the Resurrection is a "mysterious experience of a few."[154] Tillich says that the Cross "whatever the historical circumstances may have been, is a symbol based on a fact. But the same is true of the Resurrection."[155] But a closer examination of this is needed to appreciate just how great a role ecstatic reason plays in this Resurrection symbol, if not an exclusive role.

The Resurrection symbol is the result of the application of the Resurrection symbol to the Christ by his disciples as they already knew it from pagan theology.

> The disciples' assertion that the symbol had become an event was dependent in part upon their belief in Jesus, who, as the Christ, became the Messiah. . . . The character of this event remains in darkness, even in the poetic rationalization of the Easter story.[156]

Tillich speaks about a real experience on the part of the disciples that

> made it possible for the disciples to apply the known symbol of resurrection to Jesus, thus acknowledging him definitely as the Christ. They called this experienced event the "Resurrection of the Christ," and it was a

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[153] ST II, p. 157.

[154] ST II, p. 153.

[155] ST II, p. 154.

[156] ST II, p. 154.

combination of event and symbol.[157]

This seems to make clear that this whole symbol is the result of ecstatic reason. The certitude involved in this symbol is not related to the historical value of the so-called reality of the symbol. At best, historical research produces probability.

Before proceeding to the positive significance of this symbol, it will be useful to examine what it does not represent. According to Tillich, the Resurrection has nothing to do with a physical body.

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[157] ST II, p. 154. The notion of historical myth developed earlier is applied to Christ in the 1928 article "The Religious Symbol." (Das Religiöse Symbol.)

". . . the Jahwe myth is an historical myth, that is, it is related to the empirical realities of history. It has the realism of the historical." Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 22.

"These historical personalities, in so far as they are considered as symbols . . . have no place in the objective world. More than this, they cannot have such a place even though it be to their advantage as historical figures. This signifies, however, that these objects that possess a holy character are not empirical, even if they can only be conceived of as existing in the empirical order. This means that they are symbols, they represent the presence of the unconditioned transcendent in the empirical order. That this presence is viewed as an empirical event (for example, the resurrection), indicates the figurative character that attaches to every objectification of the transcendent. It is therefore correct to say that Christ or Buddha, for example, in so far as the unconditioned transcendent is envisaged in them, are symbols. But they are symbols that have at the same time an empirical, historical aspect and in whose symbolic meaning the empirical is involved." Ibid., p. 29.

> The word "resurrection" has for many people the connotation of dead bodies leaving their graves or other fanciful images. But resurrection means the victory of the New state of things, the New Being born out of the death of the Old. Resurrection is not an event that might happen in some remote future, but it is the power of the New Being to create life out of death, here and now, today and tomorrow. . . . Resurrection happens <u>now</u>, or it does not happen at all.[158]

Any such account is but a rationalization. Tillich also rejects any spiritualistic theory of the Resurrection that could be identified with spiritualistic seances. Finally, the event is more than "an inner event in the minds of Jesus' adherents."[159] Tillich rejects this psychological theory because it "misses the reality of the event which is presupposed in the symbol--the event of the Resurrection of the Christ."[160]

In order to find the reality of this symbol, Tillich has recourse to his existentialistic interpretation of the Cross and of original sin. Tillich says that

> we must look at the negativity which is overcome in it [the Resurrection]. Certainly, it is not the death of an individual man, no matter how important. Therefore, the revival of an individual man or his reappearance as a spirit cannot be the event of Resurrection. The negativity which is overcome in the Resurrection is that of the disappearance of him whose being was the New Being.[161]

The Resurrection, therefore, is not the Resurrection of

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[158] <u>NB</u>, p. 24.

[159] <u>ST II</u>, p. 156.

[160] <u>ST II</u>, p. 156.

[161] <u>ST II</u>, p. 156.

Jesus, yet Tillich says that something happened. "In an ecstatic experience the concrete picture of Jesus of Nazareth became indissolubly united with the reality of the New Being."[162]

The disciples associate Jesus with the New Being and wherever the New Being operates, they consider Jesus to operate. Yet in reality, this is symbolic and not a question of a literal bodily or ghostly presence of Jesus, but this presence is described as having "the character of spiritual presence."[163] The event, therefore, of this symbol is subjective rather than objective. It is in the area, not of technical reason, but of ecstatic reason. This event is the ultimate part of the symbol.

The positive character of this Resurrection symbol is the triumph of the divine in and through human existence.

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[162] ST II, p. 157.

[163] ST II, p. 157. Nels Ferré, one of the contributors to The Theology of Paul Tillich (Kegley and Bretall, New York: Macmillan Co., 1952), has this to say about the Resurrection--an opinion that coincides with that of Paul Tillich: "But what of the human personality of Jesus? Did that rise? Actually, whether or not the human personality of Jesus rose we have no way of knowing for certain. History cannot be proved." Nels F. S. Ferré, The Christian Understanding of God, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), p. 212.

Rudolph Otto expresses this same notion of Resurrection that is found in Systematic Theology. He says that Christ "did not contemplate a bodily revivification and resurrection after his death . . ." Rudolph Otto, The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man, trans. Floyd Felson and Bertram Lee-Wolf (London: Letterworth Press, 1943), p. 237.

> In the symbolic words concerning the "rising after three days," He [Christ] indicated that his rejection and His death would not be a defeat, but rather the necessary steps to His becoming the Christ.[164]

In the sermon,"Yes and No," Tillich points out that in Christ

> all promises of God have become real, and that in Him a life and a truth which is beyond Yes and No has become manifest. This is the meaning of "Resurrection." The No of death is conquered and the Yes of life is transcended by that which has appeared in Him. A life which is not balanced by death, a truth which is not balanced by error is visible in His being. He shows the final Yes without another No. This is the Easter message; this is the Christian message altogether.[165]

This particular interpretation Tillich finds in St. Paul's second epistle to the Corinthinians, 1:19-20, and the same interpretation, likewise, is given to the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. This interpretation, Tillich calls the "restitution theory." It is

> the ecstatic confirmation of the indestructible unity of the New Being and its bearer, Jesus of Nazareth. . . . According to it, the Resurrection is the restitution of Jesus as the Christ, a restitution which is rooted in the personal unity between Jesus and God and in the impact of this unity on the minds of the apostles.[166]

Just as there were certain other symbols that corroborated and shed light on the Crucifixion symbol, so, too, there are several symbols that have the same corroborating

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[164] SF, p. 146.

[165] NB, p. 103.

[166] ST II, p. 157. Tillich admits that this is but a theory.

and enlightening relationship to the Resurrection symbol. Among these symbols Tillich mentions the various miracles recorded in the New Testament. ". . . the miracles of Jesus as the Christ belong to the symbols of victory and corroborate the central symbol of Resurrection."[167] The miracles of Jesus, however, have a very restricted meaning for Tillich, and only within the framework of this meaning can they be said to corroborate the symbol of the Resurrection. He speaks of miracles as sign-events. He objects to those exaggerated miracle stories that measure the revelatory value of the miracle in proportion to its unusualness, or according to the astonishment it provokes. Tillich insists that "miracles cannot be interpreted in terms of a supra-natural interference in natural processes."[168] He stresses the dominant part that ecstatic reason plays in what he refers to as a miracle. Technical reason plays no active part here. Since in no miracle is there any question of an extra-mental objective deed, the part that reason plays is passive. "Reason receives revelation in ecstasy and miracle. . ."[169]

> A genuine miracle is first of all an event which is astonishing, unusual, shaking, without contradicting the rational structure of reality. In the second place, it is an event which points to the mystery of being, expressing its relation to us in a definite way. In the third

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[167] ST II, p. 161. [168] ST I, p. 116. [169] ST I, p. 118.

> place, it is an occurrence which is received as a sign-event in an ecstatic experience. Only if these three conditions are fulfilled can one speak of a genuine miracle. That which does not shake one by its astonishing character has no revelatory power. That which shakes one without pointing to the mystery of being is not miracle but sorcery. That which is not received in ecstasy is a report about the belief in a miracle, not an actual miracle. This is emphasized in the synoptic records of the miracles of Jesus. Miracles are given only to those for whom they are sign-events, to those who receive them in faith. Jesus refuses to perform "objective" miracles. They are a contradiction in terms. This strict correlation makes it possible to exchange the words describing miracles and those describing ecstasy. One can say that ecstasy is the miracle of the mind and that miracle is the ecstasy of reality.[170]

Tillich is not unaware of the biblical account of the miracle stories. In fact, he says that "some of them are significant in pointing to the appearance of the new state of things."[171] The Tillichian interpretation of miracles will always be related to the new eon and to the partial overcoming "of the evils of the existential self-destruction."[172] These evils were not fully overcome since the people who were the objects of the miraculous event did once again get sick and, finally, did die. The so-called miracles did have the value of representing--by anticipation--the final and full "victory of the New Being over existential self-destruction,"[173] as realized in the

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[170] *ST* I, p. 117.

[171] *ST* II, p. 160.

[172] *ST* II, p. 160.

[173] *ST* II, p. 160.

Resurrection symbol. Tillich stresses this idea of victory over the structures of evil. "The saving power of the New Being is, above all, power over the enslaving structures of evil."[174] It is only in this sense that Tillich considers these miracle stories to confirm the symbol of the Resurrection.

It seems that he reduces the miracles of Christ, in large part, to the healing powers of a physician or a psychiatrist. In The New Being there is a sermon entitled "On Healing." Christ here is presented as the Healer and Savior. ". . . 'Savior' means 'healer' . . ."[175] Those who are healed are always described in the language of estrangement. Tillich speaks of "mental cleavage. . . .[of being] disrupted, split, disintegrated . . ."[176] In answer to the question as to whether we of the twentieth century are still able to experience this healing power of the Savior, Tillich very clearly states his position on miracles:

> I do not speak of theological inhibitions about the acceptance of such a picture of the Christ. They do not weigh very heavily. Of course we were worried about miracle-stories for many decades; today we know what the New Testament always knew--that miracles are signs pointing to the presence of a divine power in nature and history, and that they are in no way negations of natural laws.[177]

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[174] ST II, p. 161.

[175] NB, p. 43.

[176] NB, p. 43.

[177] NB, p. 44.

He admits that miracles are going on today, that today we can experience the healing power of the New Being, but, once again, it is a healing which does not seem to differ qualitatively from the healing power of the psychiatrist or the medical doctor.

> Are we healed, have we received healing forces, here and there from the power of the picture of Jesus as the Savior? Are we grasped by this power? Is it strong enough to overcome our neurotic trends, the rebellion of unconscious strivings, the split in our conscious being, the diseases which disintegrate our minds and destroy our bodies . . .[178]

Disease will be described largely in psychological terms and the healing will be expressed, likewise, in the same psychological language. The nature of the self-destruction that the symbol of the Resurrection is to overcome, the importance of experience in this healing, and, finally, the stress, once again, on the "picture of Jesus" rather than on the reality of Jesus' personality in the miracle experience, is most evident in the following passage:

> Have we overcome in moments of grace the torturing anxiety . . . the restlessness . . . the unordered desires . . . the hidden repressions . . . the hostility . . . the hidden will to death? Have we experienced now and then in moments of grace that we are made whole, that destructive spirits have left us, that psychic compulsions are dissolved . . . that despair . . . is healed . . . and we are saved from self-destruction? Has this happened to us under the power of the picture of Jesus as the Savior? This is . . . the true Christological problem. . . . Do we go to the physicians alone,

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[178] NB, p. 44.

> or to the psychotherapists alone or to the counsellors alone in order to be healed? Sometimes . . . we should go to them, but do we also . . . receive the healing power in the picture of Jesus the Christ . . .?[179]

This power of the picture of Jesus, rather than the personality of Jesus that Tillich refers to, seems to be the symbolic element of the Resurrection symbol as well as of the various miracles. It is the concrete element that points to the power of the New Being. Further examination of the nature of this power of the New Being will seem to identify it with the ground of being-itself. The miraculous power in the Resurrection symbol--the miraculous power in Christ--points beyond Christ to the ground of being. Is this now what Tillich is referring to when he asserts that

> miracles are described as an ecstatically received understanding of constellations of factors which point to the divine Ground of Being. This definition was formulated on the basis of the New Testament miracle stories . . . It is even more understandable that, as early as the New Testament, a rationalization took place which expressed itself in the desire to emphasize the antinatural element in the stories instead of their power to point to the presence of the divine power overcoming existential destruction.[180]

In addition to these miracles, Tillich singles out certain particular symbols for special comment and, precisely, in so far as they bear on the symbol of the Resurrection. The first one to be mentioned is the symbol of the Virgin Birth. We have already seen that the Birth of Jesus

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[179] NB, pp. 44-5.

[180] ST II, p. 161.

was a symbol of his pre-existence. The Virgin Birth is a symbol of the pre-existence of the New Being. Both pre-existence and post-existence are not to be taken literally, they must not be considered

> as stages in a transcendent story of a divine being which descends from and ascends to a heavenly place. Descending and ascending are spatial metaphors indicating the eternal dimension in the subjection of the bearer of the New Being to existence and in the victory of the bearer of the New Being over existence.[181]

The Virgin Birth, if literally interpreted, is to be rejected. According to Tillich, this position would exclude the Messiah from a full participation in the existentialistic predicament of mankind. The story, as found in St. Luke, is a myth and its symbolic value is to be questioned. But if a symbol has any value at all, it is that

> it expressed the conviction that the divine Spirit who has made the man Jesus of Nazareth into the Messiah has already created him as his vessel, so that the saving appearance of the New Being is independent of historical contingencies and dependent on God alone.[182]

When it comes to interpreting the Transfiguration, that event is considered to be a symbolically clear anticipation of the Resurrection; a literal interpretation is, therefore, rejected. The Ascension, likewise, is a symbol that looks back at the Resurrection and thus confirms it. In reality it expresses the same conquest of existential

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[181] ST II, p. 160.

[182] ST II, p. 160.

estrangement as the Resurrection symbol, but Tillich finds that it adds certain finality. It is experienced but once, while the Resurrection symbol is experienced more frequently. Tillich speaks about the finality of Christ's separation from historical existence that is indicated in the symbol of the Ascension and identifies it with Christ's

> spiritual presence as the power of the New Being but with the concreteness of his personal countenance. It is therefore another symbolic expression of the same event which the Resurrection expresses. If taken literally, its spatial symbolism would become absurd.[183]

The same radical interpretation is given to the symbol of Christ "'sitting at the right hand of God.'"[184] This must be de-literalized, de-mythologized, in order to have meaning; only then does it shed light on the Resurrection symbol. The "right hand of God," according to Tillich, is to be identified with God's omnipotence--his creative power--then this symbol, "sitting at the right hand of God" means

> that God's creativity is not separated from the New Being in Christ but that in its three forms (original, preserving, directing creativity) its final aim is the actualization of the New Being as manifest in the Christ.[185]

Once again, we find the notion of the manifestation of the divine in Christ; we never meet the identification of the divine power with the Christ.

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[183] ST II, p. 162.

[184] ST II, p. 162.

[185] ST II, p. 162.

The last of the symbols which corroborates the Resurrection symbol is that of the Last Judgment. Unfortunately, this very dramatic symbol has, according to Paul Tillich, been the cause of much neurotic anxiety in past generations, precisely because of a too literal interpretation. Tillich speaks of Luther's experience with this symbol. Luther found that it was prejudicial to other christological aspects of the Christ, especially to that of Christ as the Healer. The necessary de-mythologization of this symbol of Christ the Judge, Tillich finds to be expressed in the Gospel of St. John. There is a certain positive element, however, to this symbol and it consists in the fact that this symbol is concerned with the necessity on the part of each man in this life (there is no question of an after-life) to take a stand for or against Christ.[186] Each must make a decision. The

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[186]In a Christmas sermon entitled "The Destruction of Death," Tillich presents his idea of mortality and immortality in such wise that life after the grave is denied. He speaks of man's destiny as being both mortal and immortal. Yet, in an examination of the meaning of this, immortality is not something after death. Our immortality consists in contacting the Eternal now in this temporal existence--in being united now with the ground of our being. "And within Christianity there is only one 'argument' against death: the forgiveness of sins, and the victory over Him who has the power of death. It speaks of the coming of the Eternal to us, becoming temporal in order to restore our eternity. The whole man is mortal and immortal at the same time: the whole man is temporal and eternal at the same time; the whole man is judged and saved at the same time, because the Eternal took part in flesh and blood and fear of death." SF, p. 172.

factual side of the symbol is

> the crisis which happens to people who encounter the New Being and either accept it or reject it. It is an immanent judgment which is always going on in history, even where the name of Jesus is not known but where the power of the New Being, which is his being, is present . . . This immanent judgment, since it is going on under the conditions of existence, is subject to the ambiguities of life and therefore demands a symbol of an ultimate separation of the ambiguous elements of reality or their purification and elevation into the transcendent unity of the Kingdom of God.[187]

It has become a la mode to speak of crisis in theology. For Dr. Tillich, who is himself a crisis theologian, crisis has a very particular meaning. It has the meaning of judgment. It is not a judgment that has something to do with technical reason, but is related to faith and to ecstatic reason. It is the divine that grasps us and judges us now, in this life. It is not always something within our reach, as are the objects of technological reason.

> We are grasped, in the experience of faith, by the unapproachably holy which is the ground of our being and breaks into our existence and which judges us and heals us. This is "crisis" . . . The present situation is always full of "critical" elements, of forces of disintegration and self-destruction. But it becomes "crisis" in the religious sense, i. e., judgment,only in unity with the experience of grace.[188]

Finally, Tillich says that all of these symbols that are related to the Resurrection symbol (be they historical, legendary or mythological) have the same purpose as the

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[187] *ST II*, p. 164.

[188] *PE*, pp. 78-9.

Resurrection symbol, namely: they "show the New Being in Jesus as the Christ as victorious over the existential estrangement to which he has subjected himself."[189] Literalism has distorted these symbols and therefore Tillich feels the need to reinterpret them so that

> their power must be re-established by a reinterpretation which unites cosmic and existential qualities and makes it evident that a symbol is based on things and events and participates in the power of that which it symbolizes.[190]

VII. SON OF GOD--MEDIATOR

Tillich first considers the symbol "Son of God" as found in pre-Christian religions. Here there is a question of some kind of a Father-Son relationship. As a result of original sin, this unity between God and man has been broken. Christianity arrives and applies this symbol to Christ, and in applying it, transforms it. In the analysis of this Christian symbol, Tillich indicates that there is a certain truth to this symbol, but that it is frequently misinterpreted.[191] It goes without saying that this symbol is

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[189] ST II, p. 159.

[190] ST II, pp. 164-5.

[191] "Popular and monastic piety was not satisfied with the message of the eternal unity of God and man appearing under the conditions of estrangement. These pieties wanted 'more.' They wanted a God, walking on earth, participating in history, but not involved in the conflicts of existence and the ambiguities of life." ST II, p. 144. In rejecting the traditional interpretation of the term "Son of God,"

distorted if taken literally. It is superstition. "Much harm has been done in Christianity by a literalistic understanding of the symbol 'Son of God.'"[192]

An examination of a few of these misinterpretations will reveal what Tillich denies to this symbol. For the sake of convenience, we will consider Tillich's attitude toward the will of Christ, toward the intellect of Christ; and then we will consider the meaning of nature in reference to the symbol, Son of God, concluding with his interpretation of the unique Sonship of Christ.

In treating of the will of Christ, Tillich discusses its perfection and rejects the idea of sinlessness. One who

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Tillich gives us here a clear idea of what he means.

In another sermon, "Who Are My Mother and My Brother?" the same idea is expressed, with this difference, that the idea of image and picture and its effect on us is given a greater emphasis. ". . . we know that even the image of God can be distorted by the images of father and mother, so that its saving power is almost lost. This is the danger of all religion and a serious limit for our religious work. But it is not a limit for God, who again and again breaks through the images we have made of Him, and who has shown in Christ that He is not only father and mother to us, but also child . . . The Father who is also child is more than a father as He is more than a child. Therefore we can pray to the Father in heaven without transferring our hostility against the father image to Him. Because God has become child, it is possible for us to say the Our Father." NB, p. 109. These words that conclude this sermon might lead one to think that Tillich is asserting a traditional concept of the Divinity of Christ; but no, God is simply manifest in a child, but the child is not God.

[192] ST II, p. 110.

accepts the symbol, Son of God, in a literal sense, obviously predicates sinlessness as a perfection of God's will. Tillich, in denying a literal interpretation of the symbol, Son of God, feels that it is necessary to deny this perfection of sinlessness to the New Being. He claims that Christ, as all men, has finite freedom. In an analysis of Christ's temptations, the meaning of finite freedom is treated. This freedom is identified with the possibility to sin. For Christ there was a real possibility of defeat in the temptations. Tillich criticizes the opinion--which he admits theologians and popular piety have expressed throughout the history of the Church--regarding not only Christ's actual sinlessness, but his impeccability. And he says that these men have presented this position because

> they could not tolerate the full humanity of Jesus as the Christ, his finite freedom, and, with it, the possibility of defeat in temptation. Unintentionally, they deprived Jesus of his real finitude and attributed a divine transcendence to him above freedom and destiny.[193]

Just as Adam was destined, so, too, according to Tillich, Christ was destined. It was Christ's destiny that determined his decision, otherwise "the salvation of mankind would be dependent on the contingent decision of an individual man."[194] Christ's freedom is the "consequence of his

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[193] ST II, p. 127.

[194] ST II, p. 129.

destiny. His freedom was imbedded in his destiny. Freedom without destiny is mere contingency. . ."[195] In Adam there was no real question of a "yes" or a "no." Neither is there in Christ a possibility of a "yes" or a "no." Just as the Fall did not depend on the free-will decision of one man, so, too, according to Dr. Tillich, the Redemption is determined by "God's directing creativity," which Tillich refers to as divine providence.[196] This position, therefore, concerning the will of Christ, not only denies to the Son of God the perfection of the divine will, but it also denies to Christ's human will its supreme perfection, namely, its liberty.[197]

What Tillich has to say about the intellect and the knowledge of Christ is no less important in our attempt to appreciate the meaning that he gives to the symbol, Son of God. First, Tillich limits Christ's intellect. That Christ knew all truth "is, of course, nonsense and would destroy his humanity, his human reality."[198] Not only is Christ not omniscient, but Tillich finds errors in him. In Christ, there is "uncertainty in judgment, risks of error. . ."[199]

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[195] ST II, p. 130.

[196] ST II, p. 130.

[197] "God alone is above freedom and destiny." ST II, p. 127.

[198] Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought," p. 29.

[199] ST II, p. 131.

Tillich points out that the reason for the particular errors attributed to Christ's judgment are but the natural consequences of his complete finitude.

> Finitude implies openness to error, and error belongs to the participation of the Christ in man's existential predicament. Error is evident in his ancient conception of the universe, his judgments about men, his interpretation of the historical moment, his eschatological imagination.[200]

Whenever the opportunity presents itself, Dr. Tillich stresses the finitude of the Son of God. It is, he says, "one element along with others."[201] Christ's finitude

> must be emphasized against those who attribute to him a hidden omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and eternity. The latter take away the seriousness of his finitude and with it the reality of his participation in existence.[202]

There are several passages, especially in St. John, concerning Christ as the Truth which Tillich comments on in both his sermons and Systematic Theology. These particular comments reflect the a-conceptualness of their author and their existential philosophy.

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[200] ST II, p. 131.

[201] ST II, p. 132.

[202] ST II, p. 132. So concerned is Tillich to have Christ participate in the tensions of existence that he speaks of Christ's hesitation to accept the Messianic title and of his feeling of abandonment. He describes Christ's anxiety, his insecurity and loneliness. In brief, Christ "experiences all the tensions which follow from the self-relatedness of every finite person. . ." ST II, p. 131. Summarize all the characteristics of existential tensions, Tillich finds all these in Christ.

> The Fourth Gospel says of him that he _is_ truth, but this does not mean that he _has_ omniscience or absolute certainty. He _is_ the truth in so far as his being--the New Being in him--conquers the untruth of existential estrangement.[203]

As a result of this limited interpretation of Christ, the Truth, Tillich is forced, again and again, into repeating that Jesus is not a teacher. "As Jesus the man Jesus is neither an authority nor an object of faith."[204] And in the rare cases when Tillich does speak of Christ as a teacher, it is never as one who imparts knowledge to our intellect. Christ is a teacher only "in the Socratic sense, namely, in the sense of giving us the existential power of being."[205]

In a sermon entitled "What is Truth?" Tillich comments on several Johannine passages concerning the relationship of Christ and the truth. In this sermon, the search for truth is highly praised but it never leads to an enlightening of the intellect of the earnest searcher. The search brings him into an existential contact with a reality. It is by participating in this reality that we participate in Him who is the Truth.[206]

> If Jesus says,"I am the truth," he indicates that in Him the true, the genuine, the ultimate reality is present; or, in other words, that God is present, unveiled,

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[203] _ST II_, p. 131.

[204] _NB_, p. 98.

[205] Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought," p. 32.

[206] Cf. _NB_, p. 71.

> undistorted, in His infinite depth, in His unapproachable mystery.[207]

Throughout this sermon, the part of ecstatic reason is stressed. In the search for truth, no part is given to technical reason. This is a consequence of the fact that the truth in question is a-conceptual and, therefore, independent of the various formulations of dogma. These dogmas are said to divide man. The liberating truth, that here is identified with the New Being,

> appears like the brightness of lightening . . . it appears like a landscape when the fog becomes thinner and thinner and finally disappears. New darknesses, new fogs will fall upon you; but you will have <u>experienced</u>, at least once, the truth and the freedom given by the truth. Or you may be grasped by the truth in an encounter with a piece of nature . . . or in an encounter with yourself in a sudden insight into the hidden strivings of your soul.
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> . . . . . .
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> And it may even happen that you are grasped by the picture and power of Him who is truth.[208]

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[207] <u>NB</u>, p. 69.

[208] <u>NB</u>, p. 73, Emphasis added. The idea of encountering the divine in nature is frequently mentioned in <u>Systematic Theology</u>. In answer to the question: "Are we still able to understand what a sacrament means?" Tillich answers: "The sacrament, if its meaning is alive, grasps our unconscious as well as our conscious being. It grasps the creative ground of our being. It is the symbol of nature and spirit, united in salvation.

Therefore, commune with nature! Become reconciled with nature after your estrangement from it. Listen to nature in quietness, and you will find its heart. It will sound forth the glory of its divine ground. It will sigh

Of particular note in this passage is the use of the expression "the picture of Christ." We have already seen that this "picture of Christ" is used as a substitute for the person or the personality of Jesus.

Up to this point we have seen what Tillich considers to be the nature of the intellect and the will of the Son of God. Now we shall examine the meaning of nature as applied and as understood in the symbol, Son of God. Tillich finds that the term "divine nature" is questionable and that there is no meaningful application of this term to Christ. Therefore, instead of predicating the "divine nature " of Christ, Tillich prefers the term "eternal God man-unity," or "Eternal God-manhood."[209] In understanding this term we see what is meant by the symbol, Son of God. This "Eternal God-manhood" means essential man now existing without estrangement. "Eternal" in this symbol does not have anything to do with the pre-existence of Christ, but indicates simply the

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with us in the bondage of tragedy. It will speak of the indestructible hope of salvation!" SF, p. 86.

[209]"To essential man belongs the unity of his finiteness with his infinity, and it is precisely this unity which I call Godmanhood." Tillich, "A Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of the Incarnation," p. 143. "Essential Godmanhood has become historical Godmanhood in the man Jesus who is believed to be the Christ." Ibid., p. 144. "'Son of God' becomes the title of the one in whom the essential unity of God and man has appeared under the conditions of existence." ST II, p. 110.

uniqueness of this unity that exists in Christ. Within the very Godhead there always existed this unity and now in the unique event, Jesus the Christ, that unity is realized. Tillich finds this term useful because it avoids the use of terms such as nature, which according to him are too static. ". . . it is imperative to dismiss altogether the term 'human nature' in relation to the Christ and replace it by a description of the dynamics of his life . . ."[210] The term "Eternal God-manhood" is said to have this dynamic character.

In discussing the question of the two natures, Tillich finds that the doctrine of the two natures of Christ raises the right question but uses the wrong conceptual tools.[211] Once again, the preference for the a-conceptual is expressed. Technical reason is not capable of giving us the answer. The term, nature, is therefore inadequate. "When applied to man, it is ambiguous; when applied to God, it is wrong."[212] Because of this inadequacy of the term, nature, Tillich considers that both the Council of Nicea and of Chalcedon failed. He finds, likewise, that not only have Roman Catholics failed in their efforts to express the christological reality, but traditional and liberal

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[210] ST II, p. 147.

[211] Cf. ST II, p. 142.

[212] ST II, p. 142.

Protestant positions have also failed. There is need, therefore, "to find new forms in which the christological substance of the past can be expressed."[213]

The idea of God manifest in Christ is central to the symbol, Son of God. This idea of manifestation is the justification for our adoration of Christ. When we see Christ, we see the Father. In the Christmas sermon, "He Who Believes in Me . . .," Tillich says that

> in the face of Jesus the Christ, God, "makes His face to shine upon us." For nothing is left in the face of Jesus the Christ which is only Jesus of Nazareth . . . Everything in His countenance is transparent to Him who has sent Him. Therefore, and therefore alone, can we sing at Christmas-time: "O come, let us adore Him"![214]

Christ is "one man in whom God was present without limit . . ."[215] And in The Protestant Era, Tillich says that

> the divine appears through the humanity of the Christ, through the historical weakness of the church, through the finite material of the sacrament. The divine appears through the finite realities . . .[216]

Therefore, we do not adore Christ, we adore God in Christ. The concrete element of the Son of God symbol is completely diaphanous to the ultimate element of the symbol, namely, the divine ground of being.

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[213] ST II, p. 145. Tillich expresses his own indebtedness to Harnack and his History of Dogma for having shown "the inescapable contradictions and absurdities into which all attempts to solve the christological problem in terms of the two-nature theory were driven." ST II, p. 146.

[214] NB, p. 100. [215] NB, pp. 178-9. [216] PE, p. 212.

There is a danger in this Son of God symbol and it is that one might stop at the concrete element and not go beyond to what is manifest, namely, the ultimate element. Tillich speaks of such a confusion in his Dynamics of Faith as "the confusion of the bearer of the ultimate with the ultimate itself. This is done in all types of faith and has been . . . the permanent danger of Christianity."[217] There is a certain importance to the concrete element of the symbol but it is entirely proportioned to its ability to manifest the divine in it. "The question of faith is not Moses or Jesus or Mohammed; the question is: Who expresses most adequately one's ultimate concern?"[218] The value of the christological symbol is, likewise, this ability to manifest the divine and it has only this value. The Son of God symbol has that as its object. In this same passage in Dynamics of Faith Tillich discusses the various conflicts between religions and he says that there is no question of "a conflict between expressions of our ultimate concern."[219] The same criterion Tillich applies to all the christological symbols and particularly to this symbol, Son of God.

Commenting on John 12:44-50, Tillich finds that "'He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent

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[217] DF, p. 104.

[218] DF, p. 66.

[219] DF, p. 66.

me . . .'"[220] to be the perfect expression of this relationship between the ultimate and the concrete. For this reason, Christ is the perfect symbol--in him the divine is manifest as in nowhere else.

Thus far we have not considered in detail the meaning of the symbol, Son of God, in so far as it applies uniquely to Christ. "The biblical picture of Jesus is that of a unique event."[221] In what sense does Tillich admit any meaning to the symbol, the unique Son of God, the only begotten Son of God? We find the answer in the admitted similarity that exists between the position of Tillich and that of Schleiermacher, the father of modern Protestantism. For Schleiermacher, the God-consciousness in Jesus was greater than that possessed by other men, and for that reason he was the unique Son of God, the Only Begotten. It is to be noted, however, that there is no qualitative difference between the sonship the Christians have and that which Christ had.[222] It is simply a difference in intensity. Although Tillich admits the similarity of his own position with that of Schleiermacher (they both reject the two-nature structure of Christ and they both stress the a-conceptual element in

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[220] NB, p. 97.

[221] ST II, p. 151.

[222] "But this uniqueness is not exclusive. Everyone who participates in the New Being actualized in him receives the power of becoming a child of God himself." ST II, p. 111.

the symbol) but he finds that Schleiermacher's "Urbild ('original image') of what man essentially is and from which he has fallen"[223] is too anthropological in its interpretation and not sufficiently existential in its stress.

> The New Being is new not only over against existence but also over against essence, in so far as essence remains mere potentiality. The Urbild remains unmoved above existence; the New Being participates in existence and conquers it. Here again an ontological element makes the difference.[224]

It only remains now to see what Tillich's existential reinterpretation of the Son of God symbol leads to. Does not this explanation of the symbol, based as it is on a denial of the two natures in Christ and the emphasis on the idea of manifestation of God in Christ, express in existential terms a form of adoptionism? Christ is the adopted Son of God. Tillich does not deny this; in fact, he asserts that a christology of adoption has "biblical roots and, for this and other reasons, a genuine standing in Christian thought."[225] Tillich insists that one can conveniently combine both the idea of Incarnation and the idea of adoption in the symbol, Son of God. This, of course, is a paradox in the dialectics of systematic theology. Both Incarnation and adoption are symbols, and as such are not incompatible. One

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[223] ST II, p. 150.

[224] ST II, p. 150.

[225] ST II, p. 148.

symbol balances and interprets the other. "If the egeneto in the Johannine sentence , Logos sarx [sic] egeneto, the 'Word became flesh,' is pressed, we are in the midst of a mythology of metamorphosis."[226] The symbol, Incarnation, expresses "the paradox that he who transcends the universe appears in it and under its conditions."[227] The idea of adoption is, therefore, a balance of the idea of the Incarnation. Rather than meaning metamorphosis, Incarnation is the New Being's

> total manifestation in a personal life. But manifestation in a personal life is a dynamic process involving tensions, risks, dangers, and determination by freedom as well as by destiny. This is the adoption side. . ."[228]

This is, indeed, not a new interpretation of the symbol, Son of God. What is new here is the existential language rather than the idea itself of adoptionism.[229] The most novel element in this is the reason Tillich gives for the unique

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[226]ST II, p. 149.

[227]ST II, p. 149.

[228]ST II, p. 149.

[229]Tillich admits his great dependence on Bultmann for much of his New Testament interpretation. In the first volume of Theology of the New Testament, Bultmann claims that the "Son of God" title is a myth received from the Babylonians and from the Greeks. Rudolph Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, p. 130. "The formula "'Christ is God'" is false in every sense in which God is understood as an entity which can be objectivized, whether it is understood in an Arian or Nicene, an Orthodox or a Liberal sense. It is correct, if "'God'" is understood here as the event of God's acting." Rudolph Bultmann, Essays; Philosophical and Theological, (London: S. C. M. Press, 1955), p. 287.

adoption of Christ. Why was Christ chosen as the one in whom the divine would make himself manifest? The answer is said to be in the mysterious relationship that exists between freedom and destiny "which created the uninterrupted unity between him and God."[230] Tillich finds that this unity is expressed by the symbol of the Virgin Birth. This symbolism as we have already seen traces Christ back to an eternal idea in God. It is a "symbol of his pre-existence."[231]

Christ is the Mediator. Before discussing the interpretation of this symbol, Tillich discusses the fact and the meaning of the Mediator in pre-Christian religions. In both pagan and pre-Christian religions, the Mediator makes the transcendent God, concrete. The danger, too often, is that man's ultimate concern becomes so transcendent and abstract that it no longer moves him. This need of the concrete expression of the ultimate concern is, therefore, at the root of the idea of Mediator, according to Tillich. A certain concreteness is necessary for man to encounter God. In addition to this concretizing of the ultimate, the Mediator has the function of reuniting what was once united. The Mediator reunites not by reason of himself but by reason of God acting in him. It is from God that salvation comes through the Mediator. The third function of the Mediator is

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[230] ST II, p. 149.

[231] ST II, p. 149.

to show existentially estranged man what God wants man to be. The Mediator "does not represent man to God but shows what God wants man to be."[232]

There is a certain image in the symbol, Mediator, that might lead one to assert the existence of a being that was neither completely God nor completely man.

> A third kind of being between God and man would be a half-god. Exactly this was rejected in the Arian heresy. In Christ the eternal God-Man unity has appeared under the conditions of existence. The Mediator is not a half-god. This was the first great anti-heretical decision of Christianity, namely, that he is not a third reality between God and man.[233]

In the symbol, Son of God, we have already seen that Tillich rejects the idea of one person with two natures--human and divine. His position on the mediatorship of Christ is a logical conclusion from that premise. Mediatorship for Tillich is limited for the most part to the idea of manifestation and representation. As a mediator, Christ

> represents God toward man and man toward God. . . . In his [Christ] face we see the face of God, and in him

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[232] ST II, p. 93.

[233] ST II, p. 169. "The paradox of the Christian message is not that essential humanity includes the union of God and man. This belongs to the dialectics of the infinite and the finite. The paradox of the Christian message is that in one personal life essential manhood has appeared under the conditions of existence without being conquered by them. One could also speak of essential God-manhood in order to indicate the divine presence in essential manhood; but this is redundant, and the clarity of thought is served best in speaking simply of essential manhood." ST II, p. 94.

> we experience the reconciling will of God . . .[234]

We experience the manifestation of God in Christ.

> God reveals himself to us and reconciles us to him through the Mediator. God is always the one who acts, and the Mediator is the one through whom he acts. If this is understood, the term "Mediator" can be used; if not, it should be dropped.[235]

The ultimate element of this symbol is the transcendent God, and the concrete element is the New Being in so far as it manifests the essential God-manhood.

VIII. THE RELATIONSHIP OF HISTORICAL CRITICISM TO THE CHRISTOLOGICAL SYMBOLS

The question quite logically presents itself: what is the relationship between the truth of these christological symbols and historical criticism? In other words, how dependent are these symbols on the historicity of the Gospels? The answer to this question is based on the Tillichian distinction between technical reason and ecstatic reason--between reason and faith. History is the area of the concrete element of the symbols--here technical reason operates and is fallible. Faith is the area of the ultimate element of the symbol--here ecstatic reason experiences and in this existential engagement finds its certitude. It seems that everything Tillich has to say concerning the relationship of

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[234] ST II, p. 169. God is manifest in Christ.

[235] ST II, p. 170.

history to faith will find its solution in an application of these distinctions between technical and ecstatic reason. In answering the question concerning the relationship of historical criticism to Christ, Tillich explains where the criterion of the truth of a symbol lies.

There is the question of just what do we know about Jesus? Just how successful has this searching of Jesus been? In Systematic Theology there are many references to historical criticism, higher criticism and form criticism. In brief, Tillich finds that "the attempt of historical criticism to find the empirical truth about Jesus of Nazareth was a failure."[236] The historical Jesus, Tillich

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[236] ST II, p. 102. The attitude toward historical criticism expressed in Systematic Theology is found also in the 1928 article "The Religious Symbol." "The symbolical character of Christ involves also his empirical character. . . . This empirical aspect cannot be understood apart from symbolic intuition. It is not possible and it is also superfluous to probe into the empirical element 'in itself' that stands behind the symbolically interpreted, empirical aspect of Christ." Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 29n.

"Religion is greatly indebted to modern research on the life of Jesus, in that it has accomplished this task by recognizing the problematic character of the empirical element and by emphasizing the importance of the symbolic element. It is never possible, however, to alter or to re-create a symbol by means of historical criticism." Ibid., p. 30.

Concerning the invulnerability of the religious symbol Tillich says: "Scientific criticism does not of itself have the power to make religious symbols disappear." Ibid., p. 31.

In 1929, Tillich writes: "There is no way of meeting

refers to as "the Jesus behind the symbols of his reception as the Christ."[237] It is that Jesus who recedes further and further from our view. Tillich considers the words, the miracles and the name of this Jesus and admits his agnosticism. Take each one of the so-called facts of the life of Jesus and one by one submit them to the scrutiny of historical criticism and Tillich finds each one of these facts questionable. "The search for the historical Jesus was an attempt to discover a minimum of reliable facts about the man Jesus of Nazareth . . . This attempt was a failure."[238]

It is to the miracles of Jesus that Tillich gives special attention, especially in their relationship to faith in Jesus.

> People say that others or they themselves are without Christian faith, because they do not believe that the New Testament miracle stories are reliably documented. Certainly they are not . . .[239]

The attempt of historical research to give theology a foundation is a failure. Tillich admits that

> Historical research has made it obvious that there is no way to get at the historical events which have produced the Biblical picture of Jesus who is called the Christ with more than a degree of probability.[240]

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the 'historical Jesus' . . . because the Jesus of whom we have reports was from the very beginning the 'Christ of faith.'" PE, p. 82.

[237] ST II, p. 102.

[238] ST II, p. 105.

[239] DF, p. 87.

[240] DF, p. 87.

Despite this acknowledged failure of historical criticism to give the Christian faith a solid foundation, Tillich does not say that historical criticism is without value for Christian theology. Historical criticism should force the theologian to be more discerning in his use of the Sacred Scriptures. The theologian must sift the legendary and the mythical from the historical. For Tillich, however, this means the interpretation of anything miraculous or supernatural as nonhistorical and, therefore, mythical and symbolic. In The Protestant Era, Tillich says that this is precisely the duty of self-transcending realism. "Self-transcending realism requires the criticism of all forms of supra-naturalism . . ."[241]

The same scrutiny can be made of the words of Jesus. Here, too, we can arrive at no more than probability.[242] One reason Tillich gives for doubting the historicity of the words of Jesus is that he finds them in other literatures, on the lips of other men. He does not deny that they can have meaning--that is not the question--but

> their meaning is independent of the fact that he may or may not have said them. On that basis the insoluble biographical problem has no bearing on the truth of the words rightly or wrongly recorded as the words of Jesus.[243]

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[241] PE, p. 82.

[242] Cf. ST II, p. 103.

[243] ST II, p. 105.

To understand Professor Tillich's attitude toward historical criticism and the search for the historical Christ, this attitude must be considered as basic, for it is particularly responsible for the admitted failure of this quest. In the article "The Religious Symbol," Tillich elaborates on the function of historical criticism.

> It is the task of historical criticism, which runs along parallel to atheistic criticism, to prevent these groups of symbols from degenerating into false objectification. Religion is greatly indebted to modern research on the life of Jesus, in that it has accomplished this task by recognizing the problematic character of the empirical element and by emphasizing the importance of the symbolic element. It is never possible, however, to alter or to re-create a symbol by means of historical criticism. This group of symbols can also be measured by the standard of how effectively the unconditioned transcendent is expressed in them. The rise and decline of symbols is a matter of religious and not of scientific mentality . . . Scientific criticism does not in itself have the power to make religious symbols disappear.[244]

In Religion and Philosophy, R. G. Collingwood asks the question: "Is there anything we learn from the Christ-history that we could not equally learn from the Christ-myth?"[245] Tillich takes this question and considers it seriously and his answer--flowing with inexorable logic from the nature of ecstatic faith--is "No." Tillich considers this problem of whether Jesus existed or not and the effect

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[244]Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," pp. 30-31.

[245]R. G. Collingwood, Religion and Philosophy (London: Macmillan Co., 1916), p. 53.

the answer would have on the christological symbol. He has been greatly influenced by the quest of Albert Schweitzer to find the historical Jesus.[246] We do not have "a picture of the so-called historical Jesus but the insight that there is no picture behind the biblical one which could be made scientifically probable."[247] Faith is so powerful that it is able to surmount even the denial of the existence of Jesus. The same unusual nature of faith is evident in Dynamics of Faith. Here Tillich clearly expresses its independence of historical research which at best can only give probability. There may not have been a Moses, but faith can see that

> the law of Moses has unconditional validity for those who are grasped by it . . . Faith can say that the reality which is manifest in the New Testament picture of Jesus as the Christ has saving power for those who are grasped by it, no matter how much or how little can be traced to the historical figure who is called Jesus of Nazareth.[248]

Faith can have its certitude even if history proved that Jesus never existed! Can more be expected of the will?

The christological problem

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[246]"Jesus means something to our world because a mighty spiritual force streams forth from Him and flows through our time also. This fact can neither be shaken nor confirmed by any historical discovery. It is the solid foundation of Christianity." Albert Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1954), p. 397.

[247]ST II, p. 102.

[248]DF, p. 88.

> does not lie in the question of an historical event, about the empirical reality of which faith and historical science are at war . . . But the reality in question here cannot be proved or refuted empirically. It is the reality of a center of history which grasps us. . .[249]

What is the basic reason for this attitude toward all history? The basic reason for Tillich's attitude toward the relationship of the historical Christ to the christological symbols is to be found in the very nature of faith and ecstatic reason. Christ is a being grasped by faith and for that reason "theologians need not be afraid of any historical conjecture, for revealed truth lies in a dimension where it can neither be confirmed nor negated by historiography."[250] "This independence of historical truth is one of the most important consequences of the understanding of faith as the state of ultimate concern."[251] Here is seen the importance of the distinction between the knowledge of the scientist and that of the theologian. The scientist's knowledge is conceptual and detached--that of the theologian is largely a-conceptual and always existential, for he is engaged in his revelation. "Knowledge of revelation . . .

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[249] IH, p. 264. ". . . faith-knowledge does not rely on the evidence of the senses . . . and it would lose its essential nature and be transformed into a mere sorry empirical knowledge, if it relied on any other evidence than the "'witness'" of the Holy Spirit. Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy, trans. John W. Harvey, (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 222.

[250] ST I, p. 130.

[251] DF, p. 89.

does not imply factual assertions . . ."[252] This distinction between the knowledge of the theologian and that of the scientist is an attempt to protect theology from the attack of the scientists.[253] This explanation is the reason, also, why the theologian cannot criticize the scientist and vice versa. Each has his own criteria to judge the truth. The truth of revelation "is to be judged by criteria which lie within the dimension of revelatory knowledge."[254] These criteria will be existential and mystical, they will depend on one's being within the theological circle. The non-believer, therefore, working in the conceptual field of

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[252] ST I, p. 130.

[253] One of the most recurrent problems in theology is the question of the historical value of the Christian sources. Emil Brunner says that "faith cannot therefore be surprised at the uncertainty and continual fluctuations within the sphere of historical research. For this is the very nature of historical reality, so far as actual knowledge is concerned. It knows that it believes in a Christ who, from the point of view of historical science, must always remain an unsolved problem, a Christ whose bare existence may even be called a question, for reasons which cannot entirely be disregarded. Faith knows that all this is involved in the fact of the Incarnation: in the 'being found in fashion as a man,' that it is of the very essence of the One who has come 'in the flesh,' but faith itself is not affected by these fluctuations." Emil Brunner, The Mediator, trans. Olive Wyon (London: Letterworth Press, 1949), p. 169.

[254] ST I, p. 130. Historical criticism can present facts that "only lend probability--and with respect to the historical Jesus, a very faint probability. No religious certainty, no religious belief can be supported by such researches." IH, p. 265.

objective evidence is helpless here. The two are speaking a different language and are operating on a different plane. "The problem of truth and theology cannot be solved in terms of objective evidence. It can be solved only in terms of objective criteria."[255]

Another factor that influences Professor Tillich's attitude toward historical criticism is the Protestant principle and the very nature of the ultimate concern. To allow historical influence to be a foundation of faith would be a violation of the Protestant principle. To allow historical criticism to be a basis for faith would be to base theology (which is ever orientated toward the ultimate concern) on something finite and conditional. This would be the equivalent of raising the finite and the conditional to the infinite and the unconditional. This is idolatry--this is demonic distortion. Against this distortion the Protestant protest must be raised with energy--this Tillich does.

> A theology which is dependent on predetermined results of the historical approach is bound to something conditional which claims to be unconditional, that is, with something demonic. And the demonic character of any demand imposed on the historian for definite results becomes visible in the fact that it destroys his honesty. Being ultimately concerned about what is really ultimate liberates the theologian from all "sacred dishonesty." It makes conservative as well as revolutionary historical criticism open to him. Only such free

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255 Tillich, "Estrangement and Reconciliation in Modern Thought," Review of Religion, 9:14, November, 1944.

> historical work, united with the attitude of ultimate concern, can open the Bible to the systematic theologian as his basic source.[256]

There is still an additional reason for Tillich's attitude toward the historian. The Scriptures do not belong to the historian since they are not historical documents. The Scriptures belong exclusively to the theologian--to the believer--since they are exclusively reports of people already grasped by faith--people who are already engaged in the theological circle. The reports, consequently, do give us Christ, but they do not give us Jesus. To discover Jesus it will be necessary to do some sifting of the elements proper to faith and ecstatic reason from those elements which the non-believer presents. This, however, is a hopeless task, for the fact remains that we have no reports other than those of people grasped by faith. The surprising fact remains, however, that even in the Scriptures (taken not as historical documents but as documents of those already grasped by the New Being) there are certain contradictions which Dr. Tillich attempts to resolve. The Synoptics are said to conflict with John, but the fact that

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[256] ST I, p. 36. In 1929 Tillich writes: ". . . the holy is manifest in its power to overcome the demonic at special places, ultimately at one place, in Jesus as the Christ." PE, p. 111. Here we find the same distinction between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith that runs through all of Tillich's writings.

both point to Christ as a New Being seems to satisfy Tillich and save the situation, at least systematically, if not historically.[257]

> . . . there are different, and somehow contrasting, ways of interpreting the assertion that Jesus is the Christ. One can emphasize the participation of the New

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[257]The expression "the New Being" is found in "The Message and the Man Today," written in 1929. ". . . Protestantism must witness to the 'New Being' . . . which for Christian faith is manifest in Jesus as the Christ, is effective in the life of the individual personality as well as in the life of the community . . .

. . . . . .

"Where is Protestantism to be found? . . . Protestantism lies wherever, in the power of the New Being, the boundary-situation is preached, its 'No' and 'Yes' are proclaimed." PE, pp. 204-205.

The same expression appears in another article "Nature and Sacrament," which also appeared in 1929. "Nature by being brought into the context of the history of salvation, is liberated from its ambiguity. Its demonic quality is conquered in the new being in Christ." PE, pp. 102-3.

In this article there is, likewise, the obvious distinction between Jesus and Christ. "No sacrament, in Christian thought, can be understood apart from its relation to the new being in Jesus as the Christ . . ." PE, p. 102.

"The Christ is, as Jesus replies to the Baptist, to be recognized by his power of healing. The disciples receive the gift of healing, because it belongs to the new being." PE, p. 106.

"We must recognize the inadequacy of 'Protestant personalism' and overcome the tendency to focus attention on the so-called 'personality' of Jesus instead of on the new being that he expresses in his person. PE, p. 112.

> Being in the conditions of existence or the victory of the New Being over the conditions of existence. Obviously, the first is the Synoptic, the second the Johannine, emphasis. The question here is not whether one can produce a harmonious historical picture by a combination of both pictures. Historical research has answered this question almost unanimously in the negative.[258]

Not only is there a conflict between the historian and the theologian, but even within the mind of the theologian there are conflicts. These conflicts are evidently from the concrete level of the symbols concerning Christ and are resolved, not on that level, but beneath, that is, on the ultimate level of the New Being. These conflicts, according to Tillich, did not become evident for a long time.

> The astonishing fact that these contrasts have not been felt over hundreds of years is due largely to the predominant influence of the Christ-picture of the Fourth Gospel in association with the cryptomonophysitic trend of the church.[259]

Tillich finds incompatabilities between the picture of Christ presented in the Synoptics and that given by St. John. ". . . the contrasts are seen by many Christians, and they cannot be asked to close their eyes."[260] These various and varying descriptions of Christ are but frames--symbolic frames. We must learn to distinguish between the frame and the picture.

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[258] ST II, p. 136.

[259] ST II, p. 138.

[260] ST II, p. 138.

Tillich's position asserts the independence of faith and ecstatic reason from the findings of historical research and technical reason. Despite the fact that Tillich is not certain of any traits of Jesus, he does not hesitate to find in the records that the life of Christ shows "his experience of loneliness, and of meaninglessness, and of his anxiety about the violent death which threatened him."[261] It is in the Scriptures that Dr. Tillich finds the New Being, the one who "has conquered existential estrangement . . ."[262] It is in the Scriptures, likewise, that we find the picture of the New Being who shows "no traces of unbelief, namely, the removal of his personal center from the divine center . . . Nor is there any trace of concupiscence in the picture."[263]

When it is a question of Christ's complete finitude, once again, recourse is had to the Bible to substantiate this statement.[264] However, when the biblical evidence points to miracles, then they are called myths; when there is a claim of the sinlessness of Christ, then Dr. Tillich finds this "a rationalization of the biblical picture. . ."[265] When there is need of finding the support of history, Tillich finds it. "The first and historically most important

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[261] ST II, p. 124.
[262] ST II, p. 125.
[263] ST II, p. 126.
[264] ST II, p. 127.
[265] ST II, p. 127.

example in this area is the conflict of Jesus with the leaders of his nation."[266]

The result of his attitude toward historical criticism is that it makes the symbol of Christ independent of Jesus. The importance of the idea of "picture"[267] once again, plays an important role in respect to historical criticism. It is to the "picture of Jesus" rather than the person that historical reality has given the more important position.

> The Incarnation is an historical event, and occurs only once in time and space. . . . The event is unknown in any photographic sense, but the religious picture resulting from it has proved to be the power of transforming existence.[268]

Tillich does not deny that there is a factual element behind the religious picture of Christ, but we cannot know it with certainty. The religious picture--the symbol--is the phenomenon. We know it, but we do not know the noumenon. There exists, it seems a parallel between Dr. Tillich's attitude toward the relationship of the ultimate and concrete elements of the christological symbols and his attitude toward the same relationship existing in the theological symbols. As we have already seen, there is something behind each of the concepts of God--behind each of the theological symbols. However, that something cannot be conceptualized; we cannot

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[266] ST II, p. 132.

[267] Supra, pp. 185-6.

[268] Tillich, "A Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of the Incarnation," p. 145.

have certitude concerning the nature of what is referred to as the ground of being or the power of being. Similarly, here there is no doubt that there is a factual element behind the Christ of faith, but it does remain vague and indistinct. As we have already seen, we cannot be sure that his name was "Jesus." "Faith cannot even guarantee the name 'Jesus' in respect to him who was the Christ. It must leave that to the incertitudes of our historical knowledge."[269] Despite the fact that there is no special trait of the biblical picture of Jesus that can be verified with certainty, Tillich does not hesitate to say that "it can be definitely asserted that through this picture the New Being has power to transform those who are transformed by it."[270] Professor Tillich asserts this by saying "that there is an analogia imaginis . . . an analogy [of portrait] between the picture and the actual personal life from which it has arisen."[271] Analogy itself is a symbol. It helps us to speak about Jesus, but it really does not help us to know Jesus. For Tillich, analogy is a simple figure of speech--there is no question of analogy of being. The reality has created the picture of Jesus in the same way, perhaps, that the object has created the idea for Kant, but we are unable to know it

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[269] ST II, p. 107.

[270] ST II, p. 114.

[271] ST II, p. 115.

with certitude. As the idea is the important thing for Kant, so, likewise, the picture of Jesus--the christological symbols--is the important thing for Tillich. It is the religious picture that we know; we are certain only of a symbol. We know the New Being in the symbol of the New Being. "One can compare the analogia imaginis suggested here with the analogia entis--not as a method of knowing God but as a way (actually the only way) of speaking of God."[272] Tillich has no conceptual knowledge of either God or Christ; the knowledge that remains is existential and outside of the realm of concept. This symbolic knowledge, indirect and a-conceptual as it is, "has its truth value."

> The affirmation that Jesus is the Christ is an act of faith and consequently of daring courage. It is not an arbitrary leap into darkness but a decision in which elements of immediate participation and therefore certitude are mixed with elements of strangeness and therefore incertitude and doubt. But doubt is not the opposite of faith; it is an element of faith. Therefore, there is no faith without risk. The risk of faith is that it could affirm a wrong symbol of ultimate concern, a symbol which does not really express ultimacy (as, e.g., Dionysius or one's nation). But this risk lies in quite a different dimension from the risk of accepting uncertain historical facts. It is wrong, therefore, to consider the risk concerning uncertain historical facts as part of the risk of faith. The risk of faith is existential; it concerns the totality of our being, while the risk of historical judgments is theoretical and open to permanent scientific correction. Here are two different dimensions which should never be confused. A wrong faith can destroy the meaning of one's life; a wrong historical judgment cannot. It is misleading, therefore,

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[272] ST II, p. 115.

> to use the word "risk" for both dimensions in the same sense.[273]

This explains to some extent the security and the uncertainty that Tillich feels in his position, as well as his acknowledged insecurity and uncertainty--both co-exist in systematic theology. The only certainty that Tillich seems to have about Jesus is that the New Being appears in him. He asserts that there are conflicts between the Epistles and the Gospels--with this one exception--the power of the New Being shines through

> first and decisively, as the undisrupted unity of the center of his being with God; second, as the serenity and majesty of him who preserves this unity against all the attacks coming from estranged existence; and, third, as the self-surrendering love which represents and actualizes the divine love in taking the existential self-destruction upon himself. There is no passage in the Gospels--or, for that matter, in the Epistles--which takes away the power of this threefold manifestation of the New Being in the biblical picture of Jesus as the Christ.[274]

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[273] *ST* II, pp. 116-7.

[274] *ST* II, p. 138.

CHAPTER V

SYMBOLIC INTERPRETATION OF THE WORK OF THE NEW BEING

This chapter attempts to understand the work of Christ and the symbolic meaning that is given to it by Tillich. The traditional distinction, however, between the person of Christ and the work of Christ is one that Dr. Tillich rejects. He finds, in fact, such a distinction to be both unsatisfactory and theologically dangerous. This distinction

> created the impression that the person of the Christ is a reality in itself without relation to what has made him the Christ, namely, the New Being--the power of healing and salvation--in him. The correlation with those for whom he became the Christ is missing in this double, but separate, description of person and work.[1]

Despite this objection to the distinction between the person and the work of Christ, Dr. Tillich does treat of the traditional descriptions of the work of Christ. He speaks of justification and atonement, of salvation and grace, of the church and of the creed and the authority of the church. To each of these descriptions of the work of the New Being he gives his own very marked existential interpretation. It

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[1] ST II, p. 168.

is this symbolic understanding of the work of Christ that is the subject of this chapter. This consideration will, likewise, carry our investigation of the general nature of the religious symbol a step further.

I. JUSTIFICATION

In his treatment of the question of justification, Tillich stresses the importance of ecstatic reason. It is not only a question of defining terms that justifies the distinction between justification and regeneration.[2] But that distinction is dependent, likewise, "on different religious experiences."[3] There is in this justification, no room for technical reason. The faith of which there is question is "not a human act, although it happens in man; faith is the work of the divine Spirit, the power which creates the New Being, in the Christ, in individuals, in the

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[2]Regeneration is defined "as participation in the New Being, in its objective power, however fragmentary this may be. If defined in this way, Regeneration precedes Justification; for Justification presupposes faith, the state of being grasped by the divine presence.

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As a divine act, Regeneration and Justification are one. Both describe the reunion of what is estranged. Regeneration as the actual reunion, Justification as the paradoxical character of this reunion, both as accepting the unacceptable." ST II, pp. 178-9.

[3]ST II, p. 177.

church."[4] There are two ways of considering this justification, either as it is in God, and this is called objective justification, or as it exists in man and this is subjective justification. Objective justification is defined as

> the eternal act of God by which he accepts as not estranged those who are indeed estranged from him by guilt and the act by which he takes them into the unity with him is manifest in the New Being in Christ.[5]

Tillich rejects a literal interpretation of justification because that would make sinners equal to the New Being--it would make men to be what they are essentially. The symbolic interpretation (which, according to Tillich, is that of St. Paul) means that God accepts man in his unacceptability. Tillich, whose early formation was Lutheran, claims to

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[4] ST II, p. 178. In 1931 the Tillichian notion of justification by faith was as clearly expressed as in his definitive work Systematic Theology. There too we find the Protestant principle used frequently. "This idea of anticipation received its classic expression in the word of Jesus: The Kingdom of God is at hand. It is here and yet it is not here. The metaphor 'at hand' has the same double meaning as the metaphor 'anticipation' . . . The paradox inherent in these concepts indicates the character of the relation of the infinite and the finite in the light of the Protestant principle and the idea of justification: possessing and not possessing at the same time. Anticipation without possession is religiously as impossible as nearness without presence; for nobody can anticipate the ultimate without being touched by it, and nobody can pronounce that the Kingdom of God is at hand who is not already drawn into it. On the other hand, nobody can have the ultimate, nothing conditioned can possess the unconditional. And nobody can localize the divine that transcends time and space. PE, p. 171.

[5] ST II, p. 178.

express the Lutheran formula--simul peccator, simul justus. God does not effect man's justice but simply declares man to be just. In this objective justification man plays no part except the "looking away" from his own wretchedness. It is entirely from God--God finds in man no reason at all for this justification.[6]

The subjective side of justification regards man's acceptance of God's justifying decree. Man can do this much: he can recognize his own acceptability and he can accept acceptance. There is in this justification the idea of "'in spite of.'"[7] In spite of his unacceptability, in spite of his hostility toward God, man still accepts justification, and, according to Tillich, because of the New Being in Christ.

> . . . one is drawn into the power of the New Being in Christ . . . that it is the state of unity between God and man, no matter how fragmentarily realized. Accepting that one is accepted is the paradox of salvation without which there would be no salvation but only despair.[8]

This acceptance on the part of man is faith. Justification by faith does not express any causality on man's part. The gratuity--the complete gratuity--of justification is

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[6]"But whether or when He speaks to us at all does not depend upon us in any way." SF, p. 91.

[7]ST II, p. 178.

[8]ST II, p. 179.

maintained. ". . . the faith that one is accepted is the channel through which grace is mediated to man . . ."[9] God's grace, however, has no creative causality. Grace is never considered to be a principle within man; it remains something extrinsic.

This justification by faith is something experienced. Man is conscious of his guilt. This guilt is the basis for anxiety. It is in the experience of subjective justification that this anxiety is overcome.

> In the Lutheran formula that "he who is unjust is just" (in the view of the divine forgiveness) or in the more modern phrasing that "he who is unacceptable is accepted" the victory over the anxiety of guilt and condemnation is sharply expressed.[10]

Courage and justification by faith become synonyms for Tillich, both are experiences of forgiveness. Both seem to be the work, not only of the theologian, but of the psychiatrist.

> It is the paradoxical act in which one is accepted by that which infinitely transcends one's individual self. It is in the experience of the Reformers the acceptance of the unacceptable sinner into judging and transforming communion with God.
>
> The courage to be in this respect is the courage to accept the forgiveness of sins, not as an abstract assertion but as the fundamental experience in the encounter with God.[11]

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[9] ST II, p. 179.

[10] CB, p. 164.

[11] CB, p. 165.

It is in this experience of Justification that the believer is said to participate in something that transcends the self. This same idea of participating in something transcendent is used, likewise, in speaking of the work of the psychiatrist and is a partial justification for saying that Tillich identifies (at least, partially) the work of the theologian with that of the psychiatrist. Both the believer and the psychiatric patient share in something outside themselves. Both are led to a self-affirmation, in spite of the anxiety of guilt.

> In the communion of healing, for example the psychoanalytic situation, the patient participates in the healing power of the helper by whom he is accepted although he feels himself unacceptable. The healer . . . does not stand for himself as an individual but represents the objective power of acceptance and self-affirmation. This objective power works through the healer in the patient.12

This power is distinct from the psychiatrist. It seems to be no different qualitatively, however, than the power that the believer contacts in subjective justification. There seems to be simply a question of ultimacy. The power involved in justification is the more ultimate; it is to be identified with the unconditioned transcendent. In reality, the power behind the healer and the power behind subjective

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[12] CB, p. 165.

justification are identified in Tillich. The difference is that the believer averts to the fact that the power is the ultimate transcendent, the unconditional. The psychiatric patient reaches the same power in the psychiatrist but does not avert to the fact that it is, in reality, the ultimate power of the unconditional transcendent.

Tillich speaks of

> the point where the religious "acceptance as being accepted" transcends medical healing. Religion asks for the ultimate source of the power which heals by accepting the unacceptable, it asks for God. The acceptance by God, his forgiving or justifying act, is the only and ultimate source of a courage to be which is able to take the anxiety of guilt and condemnation into itself. For the ultimate power of self-affirmation can only be the power of being-itself.[13]

No other power than this is capable of overcoming man's despair and guilt and anxiety. This courage is, according to Tillich, the real meaning behind the sola fide of Luther. Nothing finite can be the basis of man's subjective justification, of his confidence. In this interpretation of sola fide there is no room for conceptualism, for any intellectual content. "Decisive for this self-affirmation is its being independent of any moral, intellectual, or religious precondition . . ."[14] The strength of this justification is the result of its existential nature. It is an experience of objective justification that gives this self-affirmation

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[13] CB, p. 166.

[14] CB, p. 165.

its strength. ". . . the courage of confidence is conditioned not by anything finite but solely by that which is unconditional itself and which we experience as unconditional in a person-to-person encounter."[15] Here Tillich identifies the unconditional with God and here he speaks of God as a person. It would be truer to say that God and person are symbols--concrete symbols of the unconditional--which are not to be identified with God. In an article "The Religious Symbol" Tillich says that

> the idea of God has by misuse through objectification lost its symbolic power in such measure that it serves largely as a concealment of the unconditional transcendent rather than as a symbol for it.[16]

It seems, therefore, that just as the psychiatrist is a symbol through which a power works, so, too, God in justification is a symbol through which the unconditional operates. God and psychiatrists are symbols. In another article Tillich says that

> the non-symbolic element in all religious knowledge is the experience of the unconditioned as the boundary, ground, and abyss of everything conditioned.. . . But the unconditioned is not God.[17]

This passage, therefore, sheds light on the relationship of God in justification. God is the symbol of the unconditioned

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[15] CB, p. 167

[16] Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 32. Emphasis added.

[17] Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge: A Response," p. 203.

transcendent and not the one who forgives. "God is the affirmative concept pointing beyond the boundary of the negative-rational terms and therefore itself a positive-symbolic term."[18] Although at times Tillich speaks in such wise that one might think that God and the unconditioned are identified, such is truly not the case. The word "God" involves a two-fold meaning. He says:

> . . . it connotes the unconditioned transcendent, the ultimate, and also an object somehow endowed with qualities of action. The first is not figurative nor symbolic, but is rather in the strictest sense what it is said to be. The second, however, is really symbolic, figurative. It is the second that is the object envisioned by the religious consciousness.[19]

For the purpose of communication the theologian is compelled to use concepts and symbols. To speak therefore of justification the theologian must use the symbol "God," but it is only a symbol of the unconditional. Justification, therefore, in its literal sense, should be expressed, it seems, as an eternal act of the unconditional by which the unconditional accepts as not estranged those who are estranged from it by guilt and by the act in which it takes them into the unity with it, which is manifest in the New Being in Christ.

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[18]"Positive-symbolic terms presuppose . . . that the immediate reality which is used in the symbol has something to do with the transcendent reality which is symbolized in it." Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge . . .", p. 203.

[19]Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 27.

II. ATONEMENT

Tillich in treating of the symbol of atonement stresses its existential nature in language that is phenomenological. "The doctrine of atonement is the description of the effect of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ on those who are grasped by it in their state of estrangement."[20] There is in this atonement two aspects: the process as considered in God, and the process as considered in the believer.[21] What is in question is man's guilt. God forgives, but this divine act is productive only if man accepts God's offer of reconciliation in spite of that guilt. In this atonement God is absolutely free. He alone is the cause of atonement. Christ as the New Being is not the cause but the channel through which this removal of man's guilt is expressed.

Tillich finds that the proper idea of atonement satisfactorily reconciles both the demands of divine justice and divine love. God's justice is satisfied by simply allowing the estrangement in man to remain--not by imposing any

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[20] ST II, p. 170.

[21] ". . . the relation of God and the creature must be interpreted in symbolic terms. Thinking is demanded on two levels. On the creaturely level, ontological elements and categories are applicable in a proper and literal sense. On the level of God's relation to the creature, the categories are affirmed and negated at the same time." ST I, p. 286.

additional punishment.

> . . . the justice of God is the act through which he lets the self-destructive consequences of existential estrangement go their way. He cannot remove them because they belong to the structure of being itself and God would cease to be God . . . if he removed these consequences.[22]

God's love[23] is essentially a movement to reunite what has been separated. "God works toward the fulfilment of every creature and toward the bringing-together into the unity of his life all who are separated and disrupted."[24] But this divine love is not so creative that it removes the estrangement in man. "Love does not destroy the freedom of the beloved and does not violate the structure of the beloved's individual and social existence."[25] If God did remove our estrangement then he would not really be loving us, according to this interpretation.[26]

The doctrine of atonement tells us that God shares in man's estrangement. He shares but does not take away our

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[22] ST II, p. 174.

[23] "As in the case of life and spirit, one speaks symbolically of God as love." ST I, p. 280.

[24] ST I, p. 281.

[25] ST I, p. 282.

[26] If there seems to be a conflict between the notion of divine justice and divine love, then Tillich tells us to find the solution "by the interpretation of love in ontological terms and of the divine love in symbolic terms." ST I, p. 283.

estrangement; that would be (as we have seen) a violation of God's justice and would also be a contradiction of our experience.

> Here we are in the very heart of the doctrine of atonement and of God's acting with man and his world. The problem, of course, is: What does it mean that God takes the suffering of the world upon himself by participating in existential estrangement? The first answer is that it is a highly symbolic kind of speaking, but a speaking which is not strange to the biblical writers. . . . If we try to say more than the symbolic assertion that "God takes the suffering of the world upon himself," we must add the statement that this suffering does not contradict God's eternal blessedness and its basis, namely, God's eternal "aseity," his being by himself and therefore beyond freedom and destiny. On the other hand, we must refer to what has been said in the sections on God as living, namely, the element of non-being which is eternally conquered in the divine life. This element of non-being, seen from inside, is the suffering that God takes upon himself by participating in existential estrangement or the state of unconquered negativity. Here the doctrine of the living God and the doctrine of atonement coincide.[27]

We have already seen in the symbol, the Cross of Christ, how God's participation in man's estrangement is manifest. The fact of atonement does not simply become known on the Cross (become manifest has more meaning than that) without, however, exerting any real causality. The suffering happens to Christ who is only man (according to the highly-symbolic language of Tillich) and this suffering is said to be participated in by God.

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[27] ST II, pp. 174-5.

III. SALVATION--GRACE

"Christology is a function of soteriology."[28] Having already considered Tillich's christology, it now remains to be seen what is soteriology.

> The early church was well aware that Christology is an existentially necessary, though not a theoretically interesting, work of the church. Its ultimate criterion, therefore, is existential itself. It is "soteriological," i.e., determined by the question of salvation.[29]

Once granted the Tillichian position concerning the existential nature of original sin, then the Tillichian symbol of salvation logically follows. Salvation means healing in Systematic Theology.

> With respect to both the original meaning of salvation (from salvus, "healed") and our present situation, it may be adequate to interpret salvation as "healing." It corresponds to the state of estrangement as the main characteristic of existence. In this sense, healing means reuniting that which is estranged, giving a center to what is split, overcoming the split between God and man, man and his world, man and himself. Out of this interpretation of salvation, the concept of the New Being has grown. Salvation is reclaiming from the old and transferring into the New Being. This understanding includes the elements of salvation which were emphasized in other periods; it includes, above all, the fulfilment of the ultimate meaning of one's existence, but it sees this in a special perspective, that of making salvus, of "healing."[30]

Although salvation means "healing," it is only in the New Being that this healing is fully achieved. In the rest of

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[28] ST II, p. 150.

[29] ST II, p. 146.

[30] ST II, p. 166.

the believers (those who are said to be "in Christ") that healing is only partially realized.

> We said before that even those who have encountered him are only fragmentarily healed. But now we must say that in him the healing quality is complete and unlimited. The Christian remains in the state of relativity with respect to salvation; the New Being in the Christ transcends every relativity in its quality and power of healing.[31]

The New Being is not the cause of salvation, but rather the "ultimate criterion of every healing and saving process."[32] There is healing prior to the New Being and a healing occurs in those who have never known the New Being. When we encounter the New Being, we encounter salvation. But the fact remains for Tillich, whenever we contact revelation, there, too, is salvation.

> . . . where there is revelation, there is salvation. Revelation . . . is the ecstatic manifestation of the Ground of Being in events, persons, and things. Such manifestations have shaking, transforming, and healing power.[33]

For Professor Tillich, salvation is not completely dependent on Christ. This is a conclusion from the fact that revelation occurs apart from Christ. ". . . it would be equally wrong to deny that revelatory events occur anywhere besides the appearance of Jesus as the Christ."[34] Christ is the center of revelation and, therefore, the center and

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[31] ST II, p. 168.

[32] ST II, p. 168.

[33] ST II, pp. 166-7.

[34] ST II, p. 166.

criterion of healing, but he is not the cause of that healing.

Tillich gives us a further insight into the nature of his concept of salvation when he discusses the certitude that the believer has concerning his own salvation and that of others. First, from St. Paul's phrase: "'Nothing can separate me from the Love of God.' Romans, chap. 8."[35] Tillich says that man can have the confidence of faith in his own salvation. One experiences, through faith, his own salvation and this experience is a certain one.[36] One cannot, however, experience the healing of another. The believer "cannot say with any degree of confidence that other persons are or are not separated from the Love of God or from ultimate fulfilment."[37] There is no way of experiencing another's salvation, yet Tillich finds a way of being certain of the salvation of others. It is an indirect, but no less certain way. Tillich asks just how necessary is the salvation of others to the realization of his own salvation. And he answers that his own fulfilment demands the fulfilment of the rest of mankind with whom he finds himself so intimately

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[35] ST I, p. 270.

[36] In the first volume of Systematic Theology, he speaks of salvation, not only as a healing, but as fulfilment. ST I, p. 147.

[37] ST I, p. 270.

associated. Here as elsewhere, for example, in treating of tradition, the nature of the church, the need of religious socialism, we encounter the consciousness of human solidarity--not to mention cosmic solidarity--that runs through the thought and writings of Professor Tillich.

> If we wish to answer the question of the fulfilment of other persons . . . we must seek the point at which the destiny of others becomes our own destiny. And this point is not hard to find. It is the participation of their being in our being. The principle of participation implies that every question concerning individual fulfilment must at the same time be a question concerning universal fulfilment. Neither can be separated from the other. . . .[38] The division of mankind into fulfilled and unfulfilled individuals, or into objects of predestination either to salvation or to condemnation, is existentially and, therefore, theologically impossible. Such a division contradicts the ultimate unity of individualization and participation in the creative ground of the divine life.[39]

Healing is partial, but it is universal. This excerpt makes clear the dependence of theology on the demands of existentialism.

This rejection of ultimate condemnation forces Tillich to re-examine other symbols in reference to this idea of universal salvation. Other symbols, such as the Last Judgment and the eschatological symbols, must be reinterpreted to agree with universal salvation.

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[38]For this reason, Dr. Tillich claims a universal salvation.

[39]ST I, p. 270.

> Only if salvation is understood as healing and saving power through the New Being in all history is the problem [of universal salvation] put on another level. In some degree all men participate in the healing power of the New Being. Otherwise, they would have no being. The self-destructive consequences of estrangement would have destroyed them. But no men are totally healed, not even those who have encountered the healing power as it appears in Jesus as the Christ. Here the concept of salvation drives us to the eschatological symbolism and its interpretation. It drives us to the symbol of cosmic healing and to the question of the relation of the eternal to the temporal with respect to the future.[40]

This reinterpretation of the eschatological symbols in relation to salvation has not been given to us in its entirety by Dr. Tillich. That is to be treated in detail in the third and last volume of Systematic Theology. Despite this lacuna in Systematic Theology, we do know that these symbols will find their meaning in time, since for man there is no literal immortality--no real eternity in which salvation is to be expressed. Salvation and healing must be interpreted, therefore, within the boundaries of time and space. No one other than God is eternal. If we have any eternity, it is now in so far as we participate in the divine eternity.

> Those who participate in the divine eternity and in the limitation of finitude have conquered the despair expressed in the experience of condemnation. In the theologically precise sense of the word, eternity is the opposite of condemnation. But if "eternal" is understood as "endless," one would ascribe endless condemnation to that which by its very nature has an end, namely, finite man. Man's time comes to an end with himself. Therefore, one should eliminate the term "eternal

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[40]ST II, p. 167.

condemnation" from the theological vocabulary.[41] This removal of eternal condemnation is a logical application of the doctrine of universal salvation and, in turn, sheds light on it.

It is not possible to understand this Tillichian interpretation of salvation as healing apart from its basic assumption that what is healed is human nature. There is for Tillich no such thing as a supernatural nature. This rejection of the distinction between the natural and the supernatural is basic to an understanding of salvation and the grace that heals. Tillich speaks about grace and its healing power, but in a sense that is dependent on his assumption that there is no supernatural. In the first volume of Systematic Theology he speaks of "the difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism" concerning the existence of the supernatural gift as "dependent on a whole group of decisions, basically on the interpretation of grace."[42]

In an article which first appeared in 1929 Tillich wrote strongly concerning his denial of the supernatural.

> Self-transcending realism requires the criticism of all forms of supra-naturalism--supra-naturalism in the sense of a theology that imagines a supra-natural world beside or above the natural one, a world in which the unconditional finds a local habitation, thus making God

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[41] ST II, p. 78.

[42] ST I, p. 258.

> a transcendent object, the creation an act at the beginning of time, the consummation a future state of things. To criticise such a conditioning of the unconditional, even if it leads to atheistic consequences, is more religious, because it is more aware of the unconditional character of the divine, than a theism that bans God into the supra-natural realm.[43]

Before examining the Tillichian concept of grace with reference to salvation, it might be useful to examine what Dr. Tillich thinks is the Catholic position concerning grace. Now and then adversaries attribute to one another positions that in reality they do not maintain. It seems that in this instance Dr. Tillich attributes a notion of grace that is not held in Catholic theological circles.

> If grace is supranatural substance, the Catholic position is consistent. If it is forgiveness received in the center of one's personality, the Protestant position is necessary.[44]

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[43] PE, p. 82. According to Tillich "it was the Protestant principle that destroyed the supra-naturalism of the Roman Catholic system, the dualism between nature and grace, which is ultimately rooted in the metaphysical devaluation of the natural as such." PE, xxvii. This Protestant principle, as we have seen, was part of the earliest of Tillich's writings. With this principle went, quite naturally, the denial of the supernatural that has ever characterized his thinking and writing.

[44] ST I, pp. 258-9. There is no question here of taking something out of context. Dr. Tillich is of the opinion that Catholic theology conceives of grace as a thing--as another substance added to our human nature. In "A History of Christian Thought," Tillich expresses the same misconception in a passage which treats of Tertullian and his concept of grace--one which Roman Catholicism is said to hold today. "Another thing can be derived from him [Tertullian] and partially from his Stoic background: for him the Spirit is a kind of fine substance . . . This fine substance is called

It is hoped that the following interpretation of grace in Systematic Theology is faithful to the thought of its author. The first thing that is clear is that grace will not be anything supernatural; it will not be an intrinsic, interior principle of divine supernatural life. It is not easy to say just what it is in Tillich. Its existential nature is clear. It will be something experienced rather than conceptualized. It is this a-conceptual nature of grace that makes it (as it does all of Dr. Tillich's theological symbols) difficult to define.

In a sermon entitled "You Are Accepted," we obtain some idea of grace. This sermon is a commentary on St. Paul's words "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Romans 5:20."[45] Tillich acknowledges that the word grace is strange to many today. It is a word which has been distorted through the years and which, perhaps, ought to be abandoned. But he finds that any attempt to discover a substitute for the word, grace, has ended in failure. There

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grace or Spirit--(which is the same thing in all Catholic theology; usually the third concept is love: grace, spirit and love are actually the same thing in Catholic theology) therefore Roman Catholicism can speak of gratia infusa, infused grace, infused like a liquid, like a very fine substance, into the soul of man and transforming it." Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought," p. 87.

[45] SF, p. 153.

remains, therefore, the need to reinterpret the contents of this symbol.

For Tillich the meaning of grace is clearly connected with the equally mysterious symbol, sin. We have already seen how this is given a very existential treatment. Because sin is considered as separation, grace will be seen as healing--as reunion.

> We do not even have a knowledge of sin unless we have already experienced the unity of life, which is grace. . . . In grace something is overcome; grace occurs "in spite of" something; grace occurs in spite of separation and estrangement. Grace is the reunion of life with life, the reconciliation of the self with itself. Grace is the acceptance of that which is rejected. Grace transforms fate into a meaningful destiny; it changes guilt into confidence and courage. There is something triumphant in the word "grace": in spite of the abounding of sin grace abounds much more.[46]

Tillich speaks in the above passage of transformation and change, but that grace clearly effects no interior change within man is evident from the "in spite of" character of grace.

The existential experiential character of grace gives us a further idea of what Dr. Tillich understands by grace. It is something encountered; it happens to us and we cannot bring it about. "It is given and cannot be produced intentionally."[47] This grace is not only something experienced

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[46] *SF*, pp. 155-6.

[47] *DF*, p. 109.

but it is something that cannot be conceptualized--something that is not related to man's intellect.[48]

> Do we know what it means to be struck by grace? It does not mean that we suddenly believe that God exists, or that Jesus is the Saviour, or that the Bible contains the truth. To believe that something is, is almost contrary to the meaning of grace. . . . We cannot transform our lives, unless we allow them to be transformed by that stroke of grace. It happens; or it does not happen. . . . It strikes us when we walk through the dark valley of a meaningless and empty life.[49]

This grace brings confidence; it assures the believer that although his sin--his estrangement--remains, he is forgiven; he is accepted. In the hour when grace strikes,

> it is as though a voice were saying: "You are accepted. You are accepted, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. Do not try to do anything now . . . Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!" If that

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[48]In 1929 Tillich strongly opposed any tendency in Protestant theology to intellectualize religion. "It is important to emphasize the reality of grace . . . because Protestant theology (as early as in Melanchthon) showed an inclination to intellectualize religion. . . . The radicalism of the Protestant protest against any visible representation of the divine made such an intellectualization almost unavoidable. But it cannot be justified.

. . . . . .

"The emphasis on the reality of grace protects theology against orthodox (and rationalistic) intellectualism." PE, p. 211.

[49]SF, p. 161.

> happens to us, we experience grace. After such an experience we may not be better than before, and we may not believe more than before. But everything is transformed. In that moment, grace conquers sin, and reconciliation bridges the gulf of estrangement. And nothing is demanded of this experience, no religious or moral or intellectual presupposition, nothing but acceptance.[50]

This grace gives man an inner feeling of peace. Because of this experience man feels at peace with the ground of his being, with himself and with his neighbor. This grace comes and goes, and so, too, the feeling of peace which results from it; for this reason, salvation is only partial in man.

Tillich, likewise, considers grace, not from man's viewpoint, but from God's. It is identical with God's love. "The divine love in relation to the unjust creature is grace."[51] This love is a love that accepts man despite his unacceptability. Here the symbol, grace, is one with the symbol of objective justification.

IV. THE CHURCH--AUTHORITY--DOGMA

We have seen how grace and salvation point out the relation of the individual to the New Being and to the ground of being. Now there is need of a word concerning the relationship of grace and salvation to society--to the community. This brings us to a consideration of the church and

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[50] *SF*, p. 162.

[51] *ST* I, p. 285.

the part it plays in Tillichian theology. According to Tillich, the symbols of the church have lost their efficacy.[52] Just what does Tillich mean by the church? What is the function, if any, of dogma and authority in the church? These are some of the problems and expressions to be discussed.

The church is the community of those who accept Christ as the New Being. It is the community in which grace and salvation have been made manifest. This community is not recognizable since it is not to be identified with any one particular organization that calls itself a church. Commenting on St. Paul's words: "For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Galatians 6:15" in a sermon "The New Being," Tillich gives us some notion of his meaning of the church and in so doing he helps us to appreciate the thoroughgoing application of this symbolism: its existential nature and the unimportance of the concrete elements of the symbols. What counts above all is the ultimate element--the unconditional that shines through.[53]

In this particular sermon, Christianity and the Christian churches are compared to Buddhism, Hinduism and Islamism. Each is the concrete element of the church symbol,

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[52]Cf. IH, p. 238.

[53]NB, p. 15.

each relative, each unimportant. What is important is the New Being that appears. That New Being can appear in any one of these concrete symbols. A few extracts from this sermon will clarify this very difficult interpretation of the church.

> What is this New Being? . . . It is neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision . . . For Paul . . . this meant . . . that neither to be a Jew nor to be a pagan is ultimately important; that only one thing counts, namely, the union with Him in whom the New Reality is present.[54]

Then Tillich proceeds to explain how unimportant the churches are and how the ultimately important element of any church is the New Being manifest in it. Everything is relative and unimportant except this New Being. Among those things mentioned as unimportant are: circumcision, baptism, sacrifice, religion, particular churches and even Christianity.

> Circumcision is a religious rite . . . sacrifices are religious rites . . . baptism is a religious rite . . . All these rites do not matter--only a New Creation. And since these rites stand . . . for the whole religion to which they belong, we can say: No religion matters--only a new state of things.[55]

What is said about religion is asserted relative to the church. The various churches do not really matter. There should not be an attempt to convert from one church to another--from Buddhism to Judaism or to Christianity. The

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[54] NB, p. 16.

[55] NB, p. 16.

important thing is the experience of the New Being wherever it is manifest.

> Don't compare your religion and our religion, your rites and our rites . . . All this is of no avail! And above all don't think that we want to convert you to English or American Christianity, to the religion of the Western World. We do not want to convert you to us, not even to the best of us.[56]

The only thing that Tillich wants to do in missionary activity is to communicate an experience to the Jews, to the Hindus, as well as to the Communists and the Humanists. Even the latter he does not try to convert.

> We want only to communicate to you an experience we have had that here and there in the world and now and then in ourselves is a New Creation, usually hidden, but sometimes manifest, and certainly manifest in Jesus who is called the Christ.[57]

> And if the Church which is the assembly of God has an ultimate significance, this is its significance: That here the reunion of man to man is pronounced and confessed and realized, even if in fragments and weaknesses and distortions. The Church is the place where the reunion of man with man is an actual event, though the Church of God is permanently betrayed by the Christian churches.[58]

This attitude toward the Church is a logical application of what we have seen concerning the general nature of symbol. In an article "Symbol and Knowledge: A Response," Tillich speaks about the truth of a symbol. What he says is applicable to the concrete element of the church symbol. What really matters is, uniquely, the ultimate element, as we

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[56] NB, pp. 17-8. [57] NB, p. 18. [58] NB, p. 23.

have already seen. Only there, in the ultimate element, is there any question of absolute truth.

> The theory of the religious symbol presupposes that an ultimate concern, the ground of meaning and being, has the ultimate truth, is the condition of every relative and preliminary truth in such a way that even the most radical scepticism as long as it asserts something, is dependent on this ultimate truth. The theory of the religious symbol brings religious certainty back to its real and absolute foundation, liberating it from the uncertainty of probable judgments about existence or non-existence.[59]

What really matters is not the conceptual element of this symbol but that ultimate element which ecstatic reason experiences. Here alone does one find truth. It is hardly necessary to mention what this concept of truth does to the function of dogma and authority in the Christian church.

This exclusive pre-occupation with the New Being will free Tillich from any worry about dogma.

> . . . we should not be too worried about the Christian religion, about the state of the Churches, about membership and doctrines . . . about sermons and sacraments. This is circumcision; and the lack of it, the secularization which today is spreading . . . is uncircumcision. Both are nothing, of no importance, if the ultimate question is asked, the question of a New Reality. <u>This</u> question, however, is of infinite importance. We should worry more about it than about anything else . . . In comparison with it everything else, even religion or non-religion, even Christianity or non-Christianity, matters very little--and ultimately nothing.[60]

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[59]Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge . . .," p. 206. Here there is a question of the concrete element of the symbol, for example, relative to the church symbol, the concrete element is Judaism, Buddhism, or Christianity.

[60]<u>NB</u>, pp. 18-9.

In a sermon, "The Yoke of Religion" the same attitude toward dogmas and the church is expressed in language that leaves us no doubt concerning the unimportance of the concrete element of the church symbol.

> Jesus is not the creator of another religion, but the victor over religion . . . We, the ministers and teachers of Christianity, do not call you to Christianity but rather to the New Being to which Christianity should be a witness and nothing else, not confusing itself with that New Being. Forget all Christian doctrines . . . Nothing is demanded of you--no idea of God, and no goodness in yourselves . . . But what is demanded is only your being open and willing to accept what is given to you, the New Being.[61]

Since the truth of a symbol is not related to intellect, that is to the conceptual element of a symbol, this attitude toward dogma is a consistent position. No less consistent is Tillich's attitude toward authority in the church. The experiential nature of truth eliminates any authoritative principle, be it Pope, Council, or Bible. When any finite being claims authority in the church, Tillich recognizes the claim of the Catholic church to be absolute and denies to any form of Protestantism such a claim. Such a claim on the part of Protestantism is but "a bad imitation of the Catholic Church."[62] Then Tillich invokes the Protestant principle. Commenting on Luke 20:1-8, in which Jesus is asked: "By what authority do you do these things?"

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[61] SF, p. 102.

[62] IH, p. 237.

Tillich says that Christ did not intend for any authority to be ultimate.

> There is something in the Christian message which is opposed to established authority. There is something in the Christian experience which revolts against subjection to even the greatest and holiest experiences of the past . . . The place where God gives authority to a man cannot be circumscribed . . . It cannot be put into the fences of doctrines and rituals. It is here, and you do not know where it comes from. You cannot derive it. You must be grasped by it. You must participate in its power. This is the reason why the question of authority never can get an ultimate answer. Certainly there are many preliminary answers. There is no day in our lives in which we do not give, silently or openly, answers to the question of authority, saying mostly "yes" and sometimes "no."
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> But an ultimate answer we cannot give. . . . We all can point passionately, but not as established authorities, to the Crucified--as does the Baptist, in the tremendous picture by the old painter Matthias Grünewald. There his whole being is in the finger with which he points to the Cross. This is the greatest symbol of which I know for the true authority of the Church and the Bible. They should not point to themselves but to the reality which breaks again and again through the established forms of their authority . . .[63]

Professor Tillich does not deny the place of authority in the church, but it must ever remain preliminary and never be ultimate. That authority like the concrete element of all symbols must point beyond itself and never claim to be identical with either the New Being or the ground of being. The authority of the New Being is not identical with the New Being

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[63] NB, pp. 87-8. Emphasis added. The best symbol of authority according to Tillich is the crucifixion. Already we have seen how Tillich interpreted the symbol of the Cross.

but is, as we saw from the symbol of the Cross, pointing beyond.

> Even the authority of Jesus the Christ is not the consecrated image of the man who rules as a dictator, but it is the authority of him who emptied himself of all authority; it is the authority of the man on the Cross.[64]

This attitude toward authority is consistent with Tillich's interpretation of Christ as the Truth. The experiential nature of both truth and authority becomes increasingly clear. The seeker after truth

> will meet the liberating truth in many forms except in one form: you never will meet it in the form of propositions which you can learn or write down and take home.[65]

One experiences truth, perhaps, in a flash of lightening or a piece of music, but there is no question of being able to conceptualize this truth or to express it in the form of a creed. Such an interpretation is opposed to its mystical nature. One must be grasped by the truth. The same logic applies to the church and its authority. The church cannot grasp me, that is the prerogative of only the New Being.[66]

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[64] NB, p. 91.

[65] NB, p. 72.

[66] Cf. NB, p. 73.

CHAPTER VI

THE PLACE OF THE WILL AND ECSTATIC REASON

The ultimate element of all religious symbols is a-conceptual. At this point this should be clear. It is capital in the exclusive religious symbolism of Paul Tillich. Once the intellect is denied this conceptual knowledge and is limited to the concrete element of the symbol, the faculty of man which plays the greater role in Tillich's theology is the will and ecstatic reason. This chapter will attempt to show the place of the will and ecstatic reason in systematic theology--a place that is truly the consequence of symbolism. This examination will involve a deeper study of faith and of courage and of the notion of holiness, in so far as it is related to courage and to man's ultimate concern. Here and there a passing remark concerning their function has been given. At this point, however, a more detailed consideration is in order. This dissertation aims, not only in presenting the symbolism of Paul Tillich, but also its necessary relationship to Tillichian courage and faith. They are a necessary result of his symbolism. Without courage and faith, Tillich would despair.

Tillich proposes to "interpret faith through an analysis of courage. . . . because . . . 'faith' needs such a

reinterpretation more than any other religious term."[1] Later on, he says that "faith is the basis of the courage to be."[2] Of their interrelation in systematic theology there is no doubt. It seems that the dependence of courage on faith is more easily understood after an understanding of Tillichian faith. For this reason, faith will be considered before courage. Tillich gives this definition: "Faith is the state of being grasped by the eternal when it breaks into the temporal, reversing the expected course of things."[3] The existential character of this ecstatic faith is characteristic of the many descriptions that Tillich gives of faith. "The biblical word for religious existence is 'faith.'"[4] This faith is primarily related to man's ultimate concern which is nothing else than the ultimate element of any living religious symbol.

In the sermon "On Healing," Tillich comments on Matthew 10:1 where Jesus confers the power of healing on the Twelve. Whenever it is a question of faith, as it is in this passage, Tillich makes it only too evident that this ecstatic faith is not concerned with beliefs or creeds--that

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[1] CB, p. 9. [2] CB, p. 173.

[3] Tillich, "Vertical and Horizontal Thinking," American Scholar, 15:104, January, 1946.

[4] BR, p. 51.

it is independent of the truth of the concrete element of all religious symbols.[5]

Tillich's description of faith is a correlative of his concept of original sin as estrangement, especially the estrangement that exists between God and man. God transcends us. Man's technical reason cannot reach God; ecstatic faith bridges the distance between God and man. Faith conquers that estrangement. The following passage, likewise, makes clear the a-conceptual aspect of this faith.

> Faith is the state of being grasped by the power of being-itself. The courage to be is an expression of faith and what 'faith' means must be understood through the courage to be. We have defined courage as the self-affirmation of being in spite of nonbeing. The power of this self-affirmation is the power of being which is effective in every act of courage. Faith is the experience of this power.
>
> But it is an experience which has a paradoxical character, the character of accepting acceptance. Being-itself transcends every finite being infinitely; God in the divine-human encounter transcends man unconditionally. Faith bridges this infinite gap by accepting the fact that in spite of it the power of being is present, that he who is separated is accepted. Faith accepts "in spite of"; and out of the "in spite of" of faith the "in spite of" of courage is born. Faith is not a theoretical affirmation of something uncertain, it is the existential acceptance of something transcending ordinary experience.[6]

Tillich gives an idea of how faith goes through the concrete elements of the religious symbols to the ground of being, when he treats of what he describes as absolute

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[5]Cf. BR, p. 52.

[6]CB, pp. 172-3.

faith.[7] Even doubt and uncertainty concerning the concrete conceptual elements of religious symbols will not destroy this ecstatic faith. The reader of Systematic Theology cannot help but wonder, at this point, what is the content of this absolute faith. Tillich says that it is without a special content. Such an attitude would substantiate what has been so often asserted in this thesis that the concrete elements of the religious symbols have only a relative character. Absolute faith "is without a special content, yet it is not without content. The content of absolute faith is the 'God above God.'"[8] This content seems to be nothing more than the ground of being. Faith takes us beyond all conceptual knowledge--beyond God--to the ground of being.[9]

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[7]Tillich approvingly interprets Luther's concept of faith "as accepting the power itself out of which we come and to which we go, however the doctrines may be through which we accept it . . . I have called that absolute faith, a faith which can lose every concrete element but which still can exist as an absolute affirmation of life as life, of being as being." Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought," pp. 202-3.

[8]CB, p. 182.

[9]In a sermon entitled "Be Strong," Tillich comments on St. Paul's words: "Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong, let all that you do be done in love." (I Cor. 16:13,14.) The following passage taken from this sermon brings out the unimportance of the concrete element of religious symbols and the need of penetrating by means of religious experience to the ultimate element of each symbol, namely, the unconditioned ground of being. "Paul asks the Corinthians to stand on something which is deeper than the physical and the social and the spiritual

This description relates faith, not to man's intellect, but to his will and emotions. It is this relationship of faith primarily to the will that permits the co-existence of faith with doubt and meaninglessness. "Can faith resist meaninglessness? Is there a kind of faith which can exist together with doubt and meaninglessness?"[10] Tillich answers his own question:

> There is only one possible answer, if one does not try to escape the question: namely that the acceptance of despair is in itself faith . . .
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> . . . . . .
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> The act of accepting meaninglessness is in itself a meaningful act. It is an act of faith.
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> . . . . . .
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> An analysis of the nature of absolute faith reveals the following elements in it. The first is the experience of the power of being which is present even in face of the most radical manifestation of nonbeing. If one says that in this experience vitality resists despair one must add that vitality in man is proportional to intentionality. The vitality that can stand the abyss of meaninglessness is aware of a hidden meaning within the

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universe, something which cannot be shaken because all levels of the universe rest on it: their divine ground. To stand on this ground is to stand in the faith, as Paul calls it . . . Standing firm in one's faith does not imply adherence to a set of beliefs; it does not require us to suppress doubts about Christian or other doctrines but it points to something which lies beyond doubt and the depth in which man's being and all being is rooted. To be aware of this ground, to live in it and out of it is ultimate strength. Be strong and stand in the faith are one and the same demand." Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought," p. 263.

[10] CB, p. 174.

> destruction of meaning. The second element in absolute faith is the dependence of the experience of nonbeing on the experience of being and the dependence of the experience of meaninglessness on the experience of meaning. Even in the state of despair one has enough being to make despair possible. There is a third element in absolute faith, the acceptance of being accepted. Of course, in the state of despair there is nobody and nothing that accepts. But there is the power of acceptance itself which is experienced. Meaninglessness, as long as it is experienced, includes an experience of the "power of acceptance." To accept this power of acceptance consciously is the religious answer of absolute faith, of a faith which has been deprived by doubt of any concrete content, which nevertheless is faith and the source of the most paradoxical manifestation of the courage to be.[11]

In this notion of faith we see the part that is played by ecstatic reason.[12] We see, too, why Tillich does not attempt to convert anyone to a creed or to a church. All of those efforts would involve technical reason and would be, therefore, primarily concerned with the concrete element of religious symbols.

> Absolute faith, or the state of being grasped by the God beyond God, is not a state which appears beside other states of the mind. It never is something separated and definite, an event which could be isolated and described. It is always a movement in, with, and under

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[11] CB, pp. 175-7.

[12] Wilhelm Herrmann, professor at Marburg and a disciple of Ritschl, also stresses this idea of faith as an experience. He says that faith is "not the arbitrary acceptance of ideas, but it is that submission to God to which we are brought by the power of God that we have ourselves experienced." Wilhelm Herrmann, Systematic Theology, trans. Nathaniel Micklem and Kenneth A. Saunders, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 69.

> other states of the mind. It is the situation on the boundary of man's possibilities. It <u>is</u> this boundary. Therefore it is both the courage of despair and the courage in and above every courage. It is not a place where one can live, it is without the safety of words and concepts, it is without a name, a church, a cult, a theology. But it is moving in the depth of all of of them. It is the power of being, in which they participate and of which they are fragmentary expressions.[13]

In the introductory chapter of this thesis, mention was made of the importance of ultimate concern in systematic theology. Tillich relates faith to ultimate concern. In <u>Dynamics of Faith</u>, faith is described as "the state of being ultimately concerned."[14] This ultimate concern brings out the element of will and emotion that predominates, not only in Tillichian faith, but in his whole theological system.

A small brochure appeared in 1931 entitled "The Protestant Principle and the Proletarian Situation" ("<u>Protestantische Prinzip Und Proletarische Situation</u>"). In this brochure we find an early presentation of Tillichian faith and its relationship to the Protestant principle.

> The Protestant principle . . . is the theological expression of the true relation between the unconditional and the conditioned or, religiously speaking, between God and man. As such, it is concerned with what theology calls "faith," namely, the state of mind in which we are grasped by the power of something unconditional which manifests itself to us as the ground and judge of our existence. The power grasping us in the state of faith is not a being beside others, not even the highest; it is not an object among objects, not even the greatest; but it is a quality of all beings and objects, the

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[13] <u>CB</u>, pp. 188-9.

[14] <u>DF</u>, p. 4.

> quality of pointing beyond themselves and their finite existence to the infinite, inexhaustible, and unapproachable depth of their being and meaning. The Protestant principle is the expression of this relationship.[15]

What is important is that no finite preliminary symbol or concern becomes man's ultimate concern, and here the Protestant principle plays its part. The ultimate concern which is the object of absolute faith is that ultimate concern which transcends the subject-object relationship.

> In terms like ultimate, unconditional, infinite, absolute, the difference between subjectivity and objectivity is overcome. The ultimate of the act of faith and the ultimate that is meant in the act of faith are one and the same. This is symbolically expressed by the mystics when they say that their knowledge of God is the knowledge God has of himself; and it is expressed by Paul when he says (I Cor. 13) that he will know as he is known, namely, by God. God never can be object without being at the same time subject. . . . The same experience expressed in abstract language is the disappearance of the ordinary subject-object scheme in the experience of the ultimate, the unconditional. In the act of faith that which is the source of this act is present beyond the cleavage of subject and object.[16]

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[15] PE, p. 163.

[16] DF, p. 11. Faith is "an act in which both the rational and the nonrational elements of his [man's] being are transcended.

"Faith as the embracing and centered act of personality is 'ecstatic.'" DF, p. 6. Reason works on the finite, it is grasped from beyond and the result is faith. Faith is, therefore, not contrary to reason; it is the fulfilment of reason. ". . . faith is the act in which reason reaches ecstatically beyond itself. . . ." DF, p. 76. Reason is here in faith as an "ecstatic experience of an ultimate concern . . . Faith as the state of ultimate concern is reason in ecstasy." DF, pp. 76-7.

This position presupposes that all men, despite their differences concerning preliminary concerns have the same ultiman concern; for only the unconditional, according to Tillich, can transcend the subject-object relationship. That is the "criterion for distinguishing true and false ultimacy. The finite which claims infinity without having it (as, e.g., a nation or success) is not able to transcend the subject-object scheme."[17] True faith and idolatrous faith are therefore to be distinguished relative to their ultimate concern.[18] "In true faith the ultimate concern is a concern about the truly ultimate; while in idolatrous faith preliminary, finite realities are elevated to the rank of ultimacy."[19]

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[17]DF, p. 11.

[18]The importance of feeling is paramount in Tillich, feeling that is related to our ultimate concern. In a sermon which is entitled "Universal Salvation," Tillich points out that the historical exactitude in the Gospel account of the darkening of the sun and the opening of the graves following the crucifixion of Jesus is not of great importance. What he finds important is the intensity of our feeling. The important question is "whether we are able to feel with the evangelists and the painters . . . [of the Passion] that the event at Golgotha is one which concerns the universe, including all nature and all history." NB, p. 176.

[19]DF, p. 12.

I. FAITH AND THE HOLY

It is not possible to understand faith in systematic theology without an understanding of the meaning of the holy.[20] In Dynamics of Faith, Tillich relates faith to the idea of the holy. Here at this point the various Tillichian notions--the sacraments and ecstatic reason, ultimate concern and religious symbolism--all meet and shed light on one another. All are facets of the same problem concerning the knowledge that man has of God; they are all attempts to reach God. Each is an expression of the epistemological problem as Tillich sees it. "The holy is the quality of that which concerns man ultimately."[21] Only that which is holy can give man ultimate concern. This concept of holiness makes it clear why it must not be overlooked in the investigation of the meaning of faith in systematic

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[20]The identity of the holy with all reality is mentioned in an article written in 1922 ("Kairos"). "The 'sacred' or the 'holy' inflames, imbues, inspires, all reality and all aspects of existence. There is no profane nature or history, no profane ego, and no profane world. All history is sacred history, everything that happens bears a mythical character; nature and history are not separated." PE, p. 43.

[21]ST I, p. 215. Tillich gives another definition of holiness. "The unapproachable character of God, or the impossibility of having a relation with him in the proper sense of the word, is expressed in the word 'holiness.'" ST I, p. 271. "Symbols for the 'all-transcending' holiness of God are 'majesty' and 'glory.'" ST I, p. 272.

theology. Tillich speaks of the phenomenological aspect of holiness and of the place that ecstatic reason plays in contacting the holy.

> Holiness is an experienced phenomenon; it is open to phenomenological description. Therefore, it is a very important cognitive "doorway" to understanding the nature of religion, for it is the most adequate basis we have for understanding the divine. The holy and the divine must be interpreted correlatively. A doctrine of God which does not include the category of holiness is not only unholy but also untrue.[22]

As a result of this notion of the holy, any facet of reality is capable of being a medium in which the divine is manifest. It goes without mention that this is an existential manifestation, that is, one accomplished by means of ecstatic reason.

> There is no type of religion which does not personify the holy which is encountered by man in his religious experience. In every religion the experience of the holy is mediated by some piece of finite reality.[23] Everything can become a medium of revelation, a bearer of divine power.[24] "Everything" not only includes all things in nature and culture . . . it also includes

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[22]ST I, p. 215.

[23]This serves as the concrete element of all religious symbols.

[24]Tillich refers to the sacramental character of reality but only in relation to his own peculiar concept of the holy. "Faith sees in a concrete piece of reality the ultimate ground and meaning of all reality. No piece of reality is excluded from the possibility of becoming a bearer of the holy . . . Such a piece of reality has, as the traditional word says, 'sacramental' character. . . . In them [facets of reality] faith experiences the content of its ultimate concern." DF, p. 58.

> principles, categories . . . Through stars and stones, trees and animals . . . sculpture and melody, poems and prose . . . the holy can encounter us.[25]

All these things are not in themselves holy. They are holy uniquely because of the fact that through them a holiness is manifest which is beyond their own being. "This something beyond themselves is the holy, the numinous presence of that which concerns us ultimately."[26] The Protestant principle which has already been discussed is the defender of the holy. "The Protestant principle overcomes the gap between the sacred and the secular spheres, between priesthood and laity. Protestantism demands a radical laicism."[27] The Protestant principle forbids any finite being to claim intrinsic holiness. God alone is holy. The rest of reality is holy only in so far as it points to that unique holiness.

> . . . holy objects are not holy in and of themselves. They are holy only by negating themselves in pointing to the divine of which they are the mediums. If they establish themselves as holy, they become demonic.[28]

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[25] BR, pp. 22-3.

[26] BR, p. 24.

[27] PE, p. 174.

[28] ST I, p. 216. Because of this peculiar concept of what is holy, Tillich denies a radical distinction between the holy and the secular. "Revelation can occur through every personality which is transparent for the ground of being." ST I, p. 121. This is the basis of Tillich's concept of what constitutes a saint. "The term 'saint' has been misunderstood and distorted; saintliness has been identified with religious or moral perfection. Protestantism, for these reasons, has finally removed the concept of saint-hood from theology and the reality of the saint from religion. But sainthood is not personal perfection. Saints are

If there is to be any distinction between the secular and the holy, it will consist in the distinction between preliminary and ultimate concern.[29] The secular will be the realm of preliminary concern, the holy of ultimate concern. But what is of preliminary concern, for example, the concrete element of a religious symbol, can be a medium for the ultimate concern through which it makes itself manifest.[30]

This brief consideration of the Tillichian idea of the holy helps us to appreciate its relationship to faith. It is Professor Tillich himself who makes this connection. In Dynamics of Faith, he says: "Where there is faith there is an awareness of holiness."[31] Holiness and faith meet in the ultimate concern. Both have the ultimate concern as

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persons who are transparent for the ground of being which is revealed through them and who are able to enter a revelatory constellation as mediums." ST I, p. 121.

[29]One of the advantages of Protestantism over Roman Catholicism, according to Tillich, is the denial of a distinction between the secular and the holy. "Protestantism denies in principle the cleavage between a sacred and a profane sphere. Since to it God alone is holy in himself and since no church, no doctrine, no saint, no institution, and no rite is holy in itself, every man and every thing and every group is profane in itself and is sacred only in so far as it becomes a symbol of the divine holiness." PE, pp. 229-30. Tillich states that Protestantism has not always been faithful to the identity of secular and holy. "The 'holy' is not one value beside others but a qualification, appearing in all values and in the whole of being. Protestantism has not always measured up to the greatness and the radicalism of this idea." PE, p. 175.

[30]Cf. ST I, p. 221.

[31]DF, p. 12.

their object. This ultimate concern is the unconditional, the divine.

> The awareness of the holy is awareness of the presence of the divine, namely of the content of our ultimate concern. This awareness is expressed in a grand way in the Old Testament from the visions of the patriarchs and Moses to the shaking experiences of the great prophets and psalmists. It is a presence which remains mysterious . . . it exercises both an attractive and a repulsive function on those who encounter it.[32]

Then Tillich goes on to speak of these two aspects of the holy as the fascinating and the shaking character of the holy.

> They can be found in all religions because they are the way in which man always encounters the representations of his ultimate concern. The reason for these two effects of the holy is obvious if we see the relation of the experience of the holy to the experience of ultimate concern.[33]

Here the active faith and the experience of the holy are identified, both are expressions of ecstatic reason, both go beyond the concrete element of the religious symbol which is the realm of technical reason. The holy, which is identified with the ultimate concern, is infinite, and it exerts an "ecstatic attraction and fascination."[34]

Mention has already been made of Tillich's distinction between a true and an idolatrous faith. The same distinction is made concerning the demonically holy and the

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[32] DF, p. 13.

[33] DF, p. 13.

[34] DF, p. 13.

truly holy. The demonically holy would be the Roman Catholic interpretation of the Eucharist.[35]

> We have distinguished between true and idolatrous faith. The holy which is demonic . . . is identical with the content of idolatrous faith. Idolatrous faith is still faith. The holy which is demonic is still holy. This is the point where the ambiguous character of religion is most visible and the dangers of faith are most obvious: the danger of faith is idolatry and the ambiguity of the holy is its demonic possibility.[36]

What does this mean relative to the concrete and to the ultimate element of the religious symbol? It means that the concrete element of any symbol becomes idolatrous and demonic when it is identified with the divine, with our ultimate concern, and refuses to point beyond itself.

Tillich speaks approvingly of a mystical faith. This mystical faith uses the symbols but never stops with them, as is too often the case with a sacramental type of faith.[37]

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[35]"It is the Protestant conviction that the Catholic doctrine of the 'transubstantiation' . . . means just such a loss of the transparence of the divine and its identification with a segment of the encountered world. Faith experiences the presence of the holy, as embodied in the picture of the Christ, in the bread and wine . . . Yet it is a doctrinal distortion of faith if the bread and the wine . . . are considered as sacred objects effective in themselves and able to be preserved in a shrine. Nothing is sacred except in the correlation of faith." DF, p. 60.

[36]DF, pp. 15-6.

[37]In 1929 Tillich identified the sacramental and the holy in an article "Nature and Sacrament." "Any object or event is sacramental in which the transcendent is perceived to be present. Sacramental objects are holy objects, laden with divine power." PE, p. 108.

Mystical faith goes beyond and through the holy, the sacramental object, to the ultimate concern. This mystical faith has nothing to do with technical reason and therefore is truly ineffable. The influence of Böhme seems to be strong in Tillich's description of mystical faith. "The interest of mystical faith is not to reject the concrete, sacramental ways of faith, but to go beyond them."[38] There is no need, however, to reject the concrete elements of the symbol.

> Mystical faith is the end of a long way from the most concrete forms of faith to the point in which all concreteness disappears in the abyss of pure divinity.[39]

Speaking of the mystics, Tillich says that they realize that the true content of faith is an ultimate concern that can neither be identified with a piece of reality as sacramental faith desires nor be expressed in terms of a rational system. It is a matter of ecstatic experience and we can only "speak of the ultimate in a language which at the same time denies the possibility of speaking about it."[40] It is in his analysis of mystical faith that Tillich reveals most clearly his idealism. He finds within his own consciousness the divine--the ultimate concern. He asks several pertinent questions:

> Is there anything to express at all if the content of mystical faith transcends anything expressible? Is not faith based on the experience of the presence of the

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[38] DF, p. 60.

[39] DF, p. 60.

[40] DF, p. 61.

> holy? How is such an experience possible if the ultimate is that which transcends all possible experience?[41]

He gives the answers of the mystics; an answer which he later on agrees with and finds necessary. This answer, therefore, describes one aspect: the ecstatic aspect of Tillichian faith.

> . . . there is a place where the ultimate is present within the finite world, namely, the depth of the human soul. This depth is the point of contact between the finite and the infinite. In order to go into it, man must empty himself of all the finite contents of his ordinary life; he must surrender all preliminary concerns for the sake of the ultimate concern. He must go beyond the pieces of reality in which sacramental faith experiences the ultimate. He must transcend the division of existence . . . that between subject and object. The ultimate is beyond this division . . . he who wants to reach the ultimate must overcome this division in himself by . . . ecstasy.[42]

Perhaps it is not yet clear how much this mystical ecstatic faith gives us. What does it guarantee us? In the second volume of Systematic Theology, Tillich says that "faith can guarantee only its own foundation, namely, the appearance of that reality which has created the faith. This reality is the New Being . . ."[43] This certitude, which was born of ecstatic experience, seems at first glance to be contrary to the idea that faith comes from hearing. But as we have already seen concerning the symbol of the Word, Tillich can

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[41] DF, p. 61.

[42] DF, p. 61.

[43] ST II, p. 114.

accept the function of hearing in faith provided that hearing is identical with encounter. In The Protestant Era, we find that

> faith is created by the hearing of the "Word." The Word is said from beyond us, to us. But, if it is received, it is no longer only transcendent. It is also immanent, creating a divine structure of reality. Thus it creates faith as the formative power of a personal life and of a community. The Word is said from beyond man, but it is said through men. Men must be able to say it, they must be grasped and transformed by it . . . [44]

II. FAITH AND COURAGE

The a-conceptualism of Tillich, the unimportance of the concrete elements of the symbols of faith, brings us to a discussion of courage as it appears in the theological symbolism of Paul Tillich. The Courage To Be is the title of one of his books. To understand the religious symbol in systematic theology one must understand what it is that Tillich means by courage, its limitation, and why it is that he considers it of such importance. Doubt and anxiety and the need of making decisions are the principal reasons for courage.[45]

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[44] PE, p. 210.

[45] The need for courage, expressed in Professor Tillich's latest writings, appeared in 1929 in a published lecture entitled "The Formative Power of Protestantism." "Protestantism denies the security of sacramental systems with inviolable forms, sacred laws, eternal structures. It

If doubt is a part of Tillich's concept of faith (as it is) that doubt is the result of his limitation of certitude to sense knowledge and mathematical knowledge.

> There are two types of knowledge which are based on complete evidence and give complete certitude. The one is the immediate evidence of sense perception. . . . The other complete evidence is that of the logical and mathematical rules. . .[46]

At the very best Tillich admits that man can have a higher or lower probability concerning extra-mental reality.

> Knowledge of reality has never the certitude of complete evidence. . . . Every knowledge of reality by the human mind has the character of higher or lower probability.[47]

The doubt will concern the concrete element of the symbol, the element grasped by technical reason. The very existential nature of faith operating through ecstatic reason will not permit a doubt concerning the ultimate element of any one of the religious symbols.

> The certitude of faith is "existential," meaning that the whole existence of man is involved. It has . . . two elements: the one, which is not a risk but a certainty about one's own being, namely, on being related to something ultimate or unconditional; the other, which is a risk and involves doubt and courage, namely, the surrender to a concern which is not really ultimate . . .[48]

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questions every claim of absoluteness . . . In every Protestant form the given reality of grace must be expressed with daring and risk." PE, p. 215.

[46]DF, p. 33.

[47]DF, p. 34.

[48]DF, pp. 34-5. In the article, "The Religious Symbol," we are given the criterion of the truth of the symbol

Because of the doubt and uncertainty concerning the concrete element of all religious symbols one can say that

> courage is that element in faith which is related to the risk of faith. One cannot replace faith by courage, but neither can one describe faith without courage.[49]

Due to the doubt existing concerning the concrete element of the religious symbols, courage is needed.[50] Courage does what faith cannot do. Courage reveals; courage opens our eyes to reality.

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and the place of doubt in the symbol. "The criterion of the truth of a symbol naturally cannot be the comparison of it with the reality to which it refers, just because this reality is absolutely beyond human comprehension. The truth of a symbol depends on its inner necessity for the symbol creating consciousness. Doubts concerning its truth show a change of mentality, a new attitude toward the unconditioned transcendent. The only criterion that is at all relevant is this: that the unconditioned is clearly grasped in its unconditionedness. A symbol that does not meet this requirement and that elevates a conditioned thing to the dignity of the Unconditioned, even if it should be false, is demonic." Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 28.

[49] DF, p. 103. The words of Tillich are: "The risk of faith is the concrete content of one's ultimate concern." Ibid. It is certainly faithful to the author's symbolism to identify the concrete element of one's ultimate concern with the concrete element of the religious symbols.

[50] To those who doubt, who seem not to have any belief, Tillich answers: "You may not believe in anything which can be stated in doctrines or symbols. But you stand on the ultimate Ground, you stand firm in your faith as long as you stand in honesty and take your doubt and your unbelief seriously without restriction. Become aware of the faith which you have, and you will find words for it and perhaps even Christian words. But with or without words, be strong--for you are strong." Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought," p. 263.

> There are no valid arguments for the "existence" of God, but there are acts of courage in which we affirm the power of being, whether we know it or not. If we know it, we accept acceptance consciously. If we do not know it, we nevertheless accept it and participate in it. And in our acceptance of that which we do not know the power of being is manifest to us. Courage has revealing power, the courage to be is the key to being-itself.[51]

Tillich says that "not arguments but the courage to be reveals the true nature of being-itself."[52] Instead of arguments we can substitute (and still be faithful to Tillich's thought) that, not the concrete element of the religious symbol, but the courage to be reveals reality. This is, it seems, Tillich's position. "Every act of courage is a manifestation of the ground of being,[53] however questionable the content of the act may be."[54]

In Tillich, as in all the philosophers of life, it is the will that is primary. Process is prior to pure act. When we considered the symbol of the Living God, we said that Tillich's concern was to avoid a static God. He, therefore, placed non-being and anxiety in God. The divine being, the divine courage, triumphs over that anxiety. It is the divine will and courage that opens up the ground of being,

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[51] CB, p. 181.

[52] CB, p. 181.

[53] We might say the ultimate element of all religious symbols.

[54] CB, p. 181.

and in this sense courage has a revelatory character.

> Nonbeing makes God a living God. Without the No he has to overcome in himself and in his creature, the divine Yes to himself would be lifeless. There would be no revelation of the ground of being, there would be no life.[55]

In addition to doubts that attack man's intellect, Tillich finds that there are anxieties threatening man.[56] Courage comes and conquers doubt and anxiety; it is faith in God that is the source and basis for this courage.

> Faith in the almighty God is the answer to the quest for a courage which is sufficient to conquer the anxiety of finitude. Ultimate courage is based upon participation in the ultimate power of being. When the invocation "Almighty God" is seriously pronounced, a victory over the threat of nonbeing is experienced, and an ultimate, courageous affirmation of existence is expressed. Neither finitude nor anxiety disappears, but they are taken into infinity and courage.[57]

There are many causes of this anxiety. Man's very contingency is said to be a cause of anxiety. Courage comes along and accepts contingency.

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[55] CB, p. 180.

[56] In his description of courage, Tillich is in no small way indebted to Nietzsche. In The Courage To Be, Tillich comments on Nietzsche's concept of courage. "Nietzsche has described its [life] ambiguity most typically . . . Courage is the power of life to affirm itself in spite of this ambiguity, while the negation of life because of its negativity is an expression of cowardice." CB, p. 27. Later on in the same work, Tillich gives his own definition of courage as "the self-affirmation of being in spite of nonbeing." CB, p. 86.

[57] ST I, p. 273.

> The man who possesses this courage does not look beyond himself to that from which he comes, but he rests in himself. Courage ignores the causal dependence of everything finite.[58]

Later on, in Systematic Theology, Tillich asserts that although "finite being includes courage . . . it cannot maintain courage against the ultimate threat of non-being. It needs a basis for ultimate courage."[59] Tillichian faith is the basis of his courage because in it the ground of being is contacted. In so far as man is man, he has courage; in so far as he has nonbeing within him, he has anxiety.

> Creatureliness implies nonbeing, but creatureliness is more than nonbeing. It carries in itself the power of being, and this power of being is its participation in being-itself, in the creative ground of being. Being a creature includes both the heritage of nonbeing (anxiety) and the heritage of being (courage).[60]

Just as the doubts concerning the symbols of faith are always related to the concrete element of the symbol--the area of technical reason and the categories--so, too, Tillichian anxieties are concerned, it seems, with the categories. "In the categories, the unity of being and nonbeing in all finite beings is manifest. Therefore, they produce anxiety . . ."[61]

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[58] ST I, p. 197. "The fact that man is causally determined makes his being contingent . . . The anxiety in which he is aware of this situation is anxiety about the lack of necessity of his being. He might not be! Then why is he? . . . There is no reasonable answer." ST I, p. 196.

[59] ST I, p. 209. [60] ST I, p. 253. [61] ST II, p. 68.

The third reason for courage is the need of making decisions.[62] Revelation, faith, Christian kerygma, do not give men certitude on the conceptual level. In a sermon, "Is There Any Word From the Lord?", Tillich brings out that this word never frees man from the need of making his own decisions.

> The Lord from whom you derive a word wants you to decide for yourselves. He does not offer you a safe way. You may be wrong in your decision. But if you realize that in relation to God man is always wrong, your wrong may turn out to be right. If in the presence of the eternal you risk defeat, through your very defeat a word from the Lord has come to you.[63]

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[62]". . . the decision in which we grasp that which grasps us, is named 'faith.'" IH, p. 260. Bultmann, likewise, defines faith as a personal decision. ". . . and faith, being personal decision, cannot be dependent upon a historian's labor." Rudolph Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, trans. Kendrick Grobel (London: S. C. M. Press, 1952), I, p. 26.

[63]NB, p. 119. The following passage concerning the nature of theology speaks about a divine spirit from whom we have received the word of wisdom and knowledge. This passage must be interpreted, however, in the light of Tillich's other remarks that revelation is not information. "Theology does not exist beside the community of those who say that Jesus is the Christ, beside the assembly of God, the Church. Theology is a work of the Church just because it is a gift of the divine spirit. Theological existence is an element of the existence of the Church. It is not a matter of socalled freethinking, or of scientific research, or of a general philosophical analysis. Theology is an expression of the faith of the Church, it is a restatement of the paradoxical statement that Jesus is the Christ in all its presuppositions and implications. Theological existence is the existence of somebody, who within the Church is grasped by the divine spirit and has received the word of wisdom and knowledge." Tillich, "Now Concerning Spiritual Gifts," Union Review, 6:16, December, 1944.

Man's intellect is never illumined because of the coming of the New Being.

> We have not become wiser . . . we are still children in knowledge. But the truth of life is in us, with an illuminating certainty, uniting us with ourselves, giving us great and restful happiness.[64]

The tension between the concrete element and the ultimate element of the symbol demands a decision.[65]

> The final revelation makes action possible.[66] There is something paradoxical in every action; it always contains a conflict of absolutism and relativism. It is based on decision . . . Every decision is, in some respect, absolutistic . . . It is a risk, rooted in the courage of being . . . Final revelation conquers the conflict between the absolutistic character and the relativistic fate of every decision and action. It shows that the right decision must sacrifice its claim to be the right decision. There are no right decisions; there are trials and defeats and successes.[67]

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[64] SF, p. 100.

[65] Cf. ST I, p. 150.

[66] The "final revelation appears in the picture of Jesus as the Christ." ST I, p. 151.

[67] ST I, pp. 152-3. In 1929 Tillich placed the same emphasis on decision that is found in Systematic Theology--the same denial of absolute dogmas. "Secular forms are open to a continuous transformation . . . Nothing is less Protestant than the Catholic sanctification of a special philosophy, a special art, a special ethics . . . Protestantism considers secularism as a continuous, ever changing task for its formative power. There is no fixed, not even a classical, solution. There are preliminary affirmations, constructions, solutions; but nothing is final. The Protestant Gestalt of grace is dynamic and flexible. The 'present' decides about the special task. . . .

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What kind of relation to the 'present' is demanded in this principle of contemporaneousness? It cannot . . . mean

A similar emphasis on the importance of decision occurs in Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality. Man's eternal destiny is said to depend on his decision for or against Christ.

> But the decision for or against the Christ is made by people who do not even know his name. What is decisive is only whether they act for or against the law of love, for which the Christ stands. Acting according to it means being received in the unity of fulfilment. Acting against it means being excluded from fulfilment and being cast into the despair of nonbeing.[68]

The basis of this courage which withstands doubts, anxieties and the ambiguities of decision is based on faith in God.[69] "Faith in the eternal God is the basis for a courage which conquers the negativities of the temporal process."[70] In a sermon, "Be Strong," Tillich has this to say:

> We are destructed by compulsions, formerly called demonic powers, and who could tell a split personality,

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bondage to the moment. Not the appearance but the depth of the present is decisive . . . The depth of every present is its power to transform the past into a future. It is, therefore, a matter of venture and decision." PE, p. 214-5.

[68] BR, p. 46.

[69] "Faith is the state of being grasped by the power of being-itself. The courage to be is an expression of faith and what 'faith' means must be understood through the courage to be. We have defined courage as the self-affirmation of being in spite of nonbeing. The power of this self-affirmation is the power of being which is effective in every act of courage. Faith is the experience of this power." CB, p. 172.

[70] ST I, p. 276.

> 'Be strong' . . . But something else can happen. Healing power, coming ultimately from the ground on which we stand in the faith can enter the personality and can restore its unity in an act of courage. It is the courage which takes upon itself the anxiety of our splits. This courage is the innermost center of faith. It dares to affirm our being in spite of rejecting it at the same time. Out of this courage emerges the greatest strength; it is the strength which overcomes the powers that split world and soul. Be courageous! Say Yes to yourselves in spite of the anxiety of the No.[71]

The courage to be in the believer is a participation in the divine courage.

> The divine self-affirmation is the power that makes the self-affirmation of the finite being, the courage to be, possible. Only because being-itself has the character of self-affirmation in spite of nonbeing is courage possible. Courage participates in the self-affirmation of being-itself, it participates in the power of being which prevails against nonbeing. He who receives this power in an act of mystical or personal or absolute faith is aware of the source of his courage to be.[72]

No concrete element of any of the theological symbols is the basis of this courage. This courage is based on a God beyond God--on the ultimate element of the theological symbols.[73]

> The ultimate source of the courage to be is the "God above God"; this is the result of our demand to transcend theism. Only if the God of theism is transcended can the anxiety of doubt and meaninglessness be taken

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[71]Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought," p. 264.

[72]CB, p. 181.

[73]"Viewing God as a being beside other things, even as the highest and most perfect being over all other beings, deprives God of his divinity, namely, of his unconditioned character. Existence means belonging to the context of being. A God who belongs to the context of being has above or below himself the ground and abyss of being, a God above God . . ." Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge: A Response," p. 205.

into the courage to be.[74]

Once again, in praising the advantages of mystical faith, Tillich points out that the only thing that one can know, and the only thing that matters in the religious symbol is the ultimate elements than man experiences.

> Mysticism does not take seriously the concrete and the doubt concerning the concrete. It plunges directly into the ground of being and meaning, and leaves the concrete, the world of finite values and meanings, behind.[75]

And this is, of course, what Tillich himself does.

Just as justification does not remove guilt or estrangement, so, too, courage (although it is said to conquer doubt and anxiety) does not remove either the doubt or the anxiety.

> Courage does not remove anxiety. Since anxiety is existential, it cannot be removed. But courage takes the anxiety of nonbeing into itself. Courage is self-affirmation "in spite of," namely in spite of nonbeing. He who acts courageously takes, in his self-affirmation, the anxiety of nonbeing upon himself. Both prepositions, "into" and "upon," are metaphoric and point to anxiety as an element within the total structure of self-affirmation, the element which gives self-affirmation the quality of "in spite of" and transforms it into courage. Anxiety turns us toward courage, because the other alternative is despair. Courage resists despair by taking anxiety into itself.[76]

As long as courage and faith unite the believer with his ultimate concern, then he can live happily with his doubts and uncertainties and anxieties, which are (as has been frequently pointed out) connected solely with the conceptual

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[74]CB, p. 186. [75]CB, p. 186. [76]CB, p. 66.

element and the concrete element of his religious symbols.[77] "The risk of failure, of error and of idolatrous distortion can be taken, because the failure cannot separate us from what is our ultimate concern," namely, the ultimate element of every religious symbol.[78]

> Courage as an element of faith is the daring self-affirmation of one's own being in spite of the powers of "nonbeing" which are the heritage of everything finite. Where there is daring and courage there is the possibility of failure. And in every act of faith this possibility is present. . . . Only certain is the ultimacy as ultimacy . . . But there is not certainty of this kind about the content of our ultimate concern, be it . . . the God of the Bible: They all are contents without immediate awareness. Their acceptance as matters of ultimate concern is a risk and therefore an act of courage.[79]

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[77]"On the basic level they [religious symbols] are representations of the unconditional transcendence and of our relations to it, and on the other levels they are the illustrations of the symbols belonging to that first level." Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 15.

[78]DF, p. 105. Tillich speaks of the various concrete symbols and the relative truth they contain. He rejects the spectator attitude and insists on the existential participation of the believer in the ultimate concern. "The special symbols are dependent on the concrete situation and configuration in which the mystery of the ground appear to us. The knowledge about God arising from such a concrete manifestation of the unconditional is true, although it may be a relative, preliminary or distorted truth. But it is not a theoretical, it is an existential truth, that is a truth to which I cannot have the spectator attitude . . . in this sense the 'symbols provide no objective knowledge but get a true awareness,' namely, of the mystery of the ground, which never can become an object for a subject, but which draws the subject into the object thus overcoming the cleavage between them." Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge . . .," pp. 203-4.

[79]DF, p. 17.

Because there is not certainty about the concrete element of any symbol, man does, indeed, need courage. At this point one can appreciate what Tillich means by the paradoxical nature of systematic theology.

"Paradoxical means 'against the opinion,' namely, the opinion of finite reason."[80] Tillich gives us as examples of paradox: "the justification of the sinner (in Luther's formula, simul peccator et iustus), and . . . the Logos becoming flesh (later expressed in the paradoxa of the creed of Chalcedon) . . ."[81] According to Tillich, "there is . . . only one genuine paradox in the Christian message--the appearance of that which conquers existence under the conditions of existence."[82] This paradoxical language is most dangerous and should be used carefully. ". . . paradoxical language should be used with discrimination."[83] All statements concerning the New Being are expressed in a paradoxical form, that is, not in the language of reason.[84] They "must

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[80] ST I, p. 57.

[81] ST I, p. 57.

[82] ST I, p. 57.

[83] ST I, p. 57.

[84] Tillich claims to be Augustinian in his thinking. In Augustine he finds "that the center of man is not the intellect but the will." Tillich, "A History of Christian Thought," p. 105. Otto, to whom Tillich is greatly indebted, likewise limits the intellect to philosophy and finds in theology that it is not the intellect, but the will that is important. ". . . Religion, as opposed to Metaphysics, has its life in the character and will." Rudolph Otto, Philosophy of Religion, trans. E. B. Dicker (London: Williams and Norgate, 1931), p. 91.

be expressed in terms of the depth of reason. If they are expressed in ordinary terms, logically contradictory statements appear."[85]

One is ever asked to go beyond with Tillich, into the depths, into the darkness, into the transcendental. The categories are powerless to express the reality of the final revelation. "Final revelation is not logical nonsense; it is a concrete event which on the level of rationality must be expressed in contradictory terms."[86] The paradox, however, does away with absolutes. "Where the paradox of final revelation is present, neither cognitive nor aesthetic, neither legal nor communal, absolutes can stand."[87]

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[85] ST I, p. 150.

[86] ST I, p. 151.

[87] ST I, p. 152.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

POSITIVE VALUES IN TILLICHIAN THEOLOGY

That there are certain elements of great value in Dr. Tillich's theological system is beyond question. Despite the brevity of their treatment here, they must not be overlooked. These elements are no less essential to his thought than those which will soon be criticized as being contrary to both sound metaphysics and to traditional Christianity.

The judgment of a theologian's work must take into consideration both his objectives and the realization of those objectives. With this in mind, one can not but have admiration for Dr. Tillich's emphasis on the divine transcendence. This is the most characteristic and the most profound and the most significant contribution that he has made to American Protestant thought. The entire purpose of his religious symbolism is, precisely, this attempt to speak about God and still not compromise his transcendence. His interpretation of the Protestant principle, likewise, is conceived as a defense of the divine transcendence.[1] There

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[1]Any reference to the Protestant principle refers specifically to that expression of the Protestant principle expounded in the writings of Professor Tillich.

is real value, too, in the principle underlying the method of correlation, namely, the desire to show the relationship of the Jewish and the Christian kerygma to the needs and questions of the twentieth century. Both Dr. Tillich and Roman Catholic kerygmatic theologians agree concerning this need. The message must not be "thrown into the situation." The Catholic theologian reading Professor Tillich's writings welcomes the place given to tradition. In his writings no claim is made that the Bible is the sole source of Christian revelation, nor is there any claim that the Bible is a self-sufficient source of revelation. Tradition and the community play their role; thus, individualism is avoided.

The position that metaphysics enjoys, both in his philosophy and his theology, is another real contribution to American Protestantism, accustomed as it has been to logical positivism. So far, Dr. Tillich's thought has not eliminated the anti-metaphysical prejudices of American Protestant theologians; but it has, at least, made them realize that metaphysics is of interest to more than the Catholic theologian. This emphasis on philosophy is a departure from Tillich's early Lutheran training. Throughout his system, there is an acknowledgment of the value of mysticism as the form of religious knowledge. Nowhere is this more evident than in his treatment of religious symbols. Such a respect for mysticism is rare in a Protestant theologian.

Dr. Tillich is, consequently, rendering a service to traditional Christianity in claiming that there is not only an experience of the divine, but a valid a-conceptual knowledge of God. The purpose of the ecstatic reason of Tillichian revelation is precisely this desire to express this experience of the divine that transcends the conceptual level. Tillich's interest in poetry and painting is not unrelated to this experience of God in nature. Much that one admires in a Wordsworth is found, likewise, in Tillichian thought.

The aspect that is the most significant and the most valuable in Dr. Tillich's system is the importance that he attaches to the imagination in the formation and the expression of religious knowledge. There is, perhaps, in certain scholastic philosophers and theologians a tendency to overemphasize the function of the intellect and the importance of conceptual knowledge to the neglect of the imagination.[2] The religious symbol is certainly related, in no small degree to the imagination. There are several sciences acknowledging the history of religions and analytical psychology which have developed during the past fifty years. Their contributions, which have interested Dr. Tillich from

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[2]St. Thomas, however, in his treatment of Divine Revelation does speak about the importance of the imagination, the "bonitas imaginationis," that is required in a prophet. Cf. De Veritate, xii, 5; Summa Th., I-II, q.172, a.4.

his student days, have all highlighted the place that the symbol and the myth have in natural religion. Dr. Tillich shares this interest in the symbol and myth along with eminent Catholic and Protestant scholars. This new interest in the myth and the religious symbol in nowise jeopardizes the traditional teaching of revelation.

Revelation can certainly make use of certain images found in various natural religions. Undoubtedly, the Hebrews came in contact with various Sumerian and Egyptian myths. It is, however, for the Scriptural scholar to determine just how much influence those myths exerted on the inspired writers. The ethnologist and the historian of religion are continuously furnishing him with important data. We can appreciate the possible relationship between the symbols of pagan myth and the images of revelation if we remember that the supernatural element of the sacrament of Matrimony is in no way a compromise in the assertion that the sacrament is identified with the natural contract, elevating it and transforming it, so that now it is an instrument of supernatural life.

In a similar manner, there is no <u>a priori</u> reason why the Jewish or the Christian revelation cannot make use of some of the images found in the mythology of natural religions, purifying them and transforming them. This is the case if one of the symbols that Dr. Tillich uses is taken--

the symbol, water. We find the use of water as a religious symbol in natural tribal rites. We find it, likewise, used in both the Old and the New Testament. The Catholic theologian can, therefore, take all of the positive that is in Dr. Tillich's emphasis on the image and the symbol and their relationship to the unconscious; and he can understand all of this far better than Dr. Tillich, by reason of a richer doctrine of the Incarnation, by reason of a true idea of the nature of revelation and because of his confidence in the reliability of the human intellect to attain truth. For the Catholic theologian, the Word was made Flesh, and in becoming man, the Second Person of the Trinity has sanctified our entire human nature, including our imagination, our unconscious and the language of the unconscious--those images which recur in natural religion.

For Tillich, there is, at least, the effort to relate the symbol to objective reality. For this reason he rejects the symbolism of Marx and Nietzsche and even of Jung, to whom he is indebted in no small degree for his own emphasis on the position of the unconscious in the formation of the symbol. His repeated insistence that the symbol is more than a sign gives evidence of this. Signs are made, but symbols are born; they cannot be made.[3]

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[3]"Some theological movements, such as Protestant Hegelianism and Catholic modernism, have interpreted

II. NEGATIVE VALUES IN TILLICHIAN THEOLOGY

Since Dr. Tillich identifies his religious symbolism with the analogy of St. Thomas, the first part of this critique will point out certain excessively objective elements that make impossible any possible identity of the two positions.[4] In other words, although Dr. Tillich makes a serious effort to give an objective participation to his symbolism, these subjective elements, for example, ultimate concern, ecstatic reason, the a priori categories, the need of an emotional encounter and the importance of the collective unconscious, all frustrate that effort. Another reason for disassociating Tillichian symbolism from Thomistic analogy is the central relativity involved in his religious symbolism. On the basis, therefore, of its excessive objectivism and its essential relativism, Tillichian symbolism can in no way be identified with the analogy of attribution and the analogy of proper proportionality of St. Thomas. Both of these elements, subjectivity and relativism, are

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religious language symbolically in order to dissolve its realistic meaning and to weaken its seriousness, its power, and its spiritual impact." ST I, p. 241.

[4]In a letter to Fr. Gustave Weigel, S. J., cited in Theological Studies, Tillich writes: "I speak of symbolic knowledge and mean with it exactly what St. Thomas means with analogia entis. The reason I use symbol more than an analogy is a methodological difference between St. Thomas and myself." Theological Studies, June, 1950, 11:201.

essential to Tillichian symbolism and are the fundamental source of his agnosticism and of his implicit denial of the divine transcendence.

The first part of the critique will be essentially philosophical; the second part will criticize certain Tillichian symbols--those concerning God, original sin and Christ--not exclusively from the viewpoint of their agreement with the Roman Catholic position, but rather on their incompatibility with the teachings of Judaism or orthodox Protestantism as well as with Roman Catholicism. Much of this critique could, therefore, be made by one who disagreed with Aquinas in philosophy and with John XXIII in theology. The fact that it is written by one who accepts both the metaphysics and the faith of St. Thomas Aquinas should not limit its meaningfullness merely to Roman Catholics. Finally, there will be a critical analysis of two fundamental attitudes, namely the Protestant principle and the method of correlation, that condition Tillichian thinking and render any acceptance of the Jewish or Christian revelation absolutely impossible.

Subjective Elements

Ultimate Concern. If there is any one element peculiar to the Tillichian system, it is the notion of ultimate concern. It is this that makes one a theologian. Revelation is described as a "matter of ultimate concern; it

grasps the total personality and is effective through a set of symbols."[5] The point to be criticized here is that his exclusive emphasis on the will robs faith of any rational basis. Ultimate concern gives no one a way of judging the true from the false concern; it leaves no room for certitude except its own concern. Although Tillich claims that the Christian revelation is final, he gives no principle to justify this other than his own experience. The experience of a Hindu can be quite different. It is one thing to say that "the fundamental symbol of our ultimate concern is God"[6]; that "the New Creation . . . is our ultimate concern . . ."[7]; and quite another to show that the objective basis for this is in extra-mental reality. The very nature of this ultimate concern swallows up the concrete element of all symbols and makes them unimportant--all doubtful.[8] There is no way of distinguishing between the truth of Christ or Buddha,

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[5]Tillich, "The Problem of the Theological Method," p. 12.

[6]DF, p. 45. [7]NB, p. 19.

[8]Dr. Karl Stern's remark concerning Jung can be very well applied to the ultimate concern of Tillichian theology. Dr. Stern says that Jung's work "'frequently leads to some sort of non-committal mysticism, a mysticism without discipline, so that in the end there remains a museum of religious experiences with Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, etc., collector's items.'" "Religion and Psychiatry," The Commonweal, October 22, 1948, cited by Victor White, O. P., God and the Unconscious (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1953), p. 193.

between the ultimate concern of a Buddhist or the ultimate concern of a Christian.

> The man whose ultimate concern is a sacred tree has both the ultimacy of concern and the concreteness of the tree which symbolizes his relation to the ultimate. The man who adores Apollo is ultimately concerned, but not in an abstract way. His ultimate concern is symbolized in the divine figure of Apollo. The man who glorifies Jahweh, the God of the Old Testament, has both an ultimate concern and a concrete image of what concerns him ultimately.[9]

The question that Dr. Tillich does not answer is: how do we know that their ultimate concern is not, in fact, the tree or is not Apollo? Since it is so subjective, being as it is an experience within the individual and incapable of communication, how can one man evaluate the ultimate concern of another--or his own?

Ecstatic Reason. Since technical reason is both incapable of attaining of itself any knowledge of God and of receiving any knowledge of God, Tillich has postulated another faculty of religious knowledge: ecstatic reason. This faculty is essential to his symbolism and points out the radical subjectivity of his system. Dr. Tillich leaves many questions unanswered concerning the real nature and the function of this faculty. Just what is this "grasp of God"? Since miracles are denied, how does one know that it is God?

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[9]DF, p. 46.

Is it an illumination of the intellect? Is it the presentation of truth? Is it a fairly common religious experience, or is it quite a rare and easily differentiable mystic union? Finally, this faculty seems to be not an intellectual faculty at all. It never receives any conceptual information.[10] It seems to be a barometer of numinous astonishment rather than a faculty of knowledge. It is a faculty essential to Tillichian symbolism, for it is, precisely, this faculty that gives certitude to the ultimate element. It is a reason for the split in symbolism, for the relativity of the concrete element that is related to technical reason--made unreliable by the Fall--and the certitude of the ultimate. The split in Tillichian thought results in a dichotomy of being. Faith and revelation are related to ecstatic reason and, therefore, divorced from intellect.

Tillich has accused Aquinas of a two-story theory. The fact is that in St. Thomas the relationship between faith and reason results in a unity. Faith is primarily and formally an intellectual virtue for St. Thomas, and only secondarily related to the will.[11] In Tillich, faith is

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[10]This remark does not mean that conceptual knowledge is the only intellectual knowledge that man enjoys. Mystical knowledge is not itself conceptual knowledge.

[11]For St. Thomas, faith is a new faculty not separate from the intellect, but perfecting the intellect, thus realizing an essential unity in man's cognition.

related exclusively to the will, or to what he calls ecstatic reason. Furthermore, the very function of ecstatic reason indicates its subjective nature. Although Tillich claims that ecstatic reason is simply a medium through which the sources of theology come to the individual, the fact is that the shaping and transforming of reality which he allows is, in truth, a creation. One has but to place Tillichian symbols beside their Christian counterparts to see that ecstatic reason results in a creation. Were St. Peter to return today he would (with a little explanation of the terminology) be able to understand the Nicene Creed.[12] On the other hand, were Luther to read Systematic Theology, he would certainly find that Tillichian symbolism was a denial of his own position.

Although Tillich claims that the Bible and tradition are the sources of systematic theology, the part played by ecstatic reason is so great that this claim is nullified.

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[12]Tillich is correct in holding that the function of the science of theology is not to be limited to the mere repetition of certain formulas. This view is beyond the Catholic idea of the development of dogma--an idea made popular in modern times by the writings of Cardinal Newman. The development must never equal the destruction of one dogma and the creation of another. Tillich, since he denies the divinity of Christ, is left powerless to explain the development of dogma. The Christian, on the other hand, for whom Christ is a living reality, today can find intelligible this deepening of the Church's awareness of the deposit of revelation. Christ is with his Church, one with his Church, enlightening it to the end of time.

The experience of ecstatic reason becomes the source of theology.

A priori categories. The Tillichian postulate concerning the categories of the mind is an expression of his Kantianism and, consequently, of the radical subjectivism of his philosophy. There are two parallel structures: that of the mind and that of the extra-mental reality. Between these two "there is an identity, or at least an analogy," between the logos of reality and the logos in the mind of the philosopher.[13] The logos-structure of extra-mental reality is called objective reason. "Subjective reason is the structure of the mind which enables it to grasp and to shape reality on the basis of a corresponding structure of reality . . ."[14] Since the technical reason fails to find anything ultimately significant in extra-mental reality, Tillich postulates the a priori ontological concepts. These categories are not only drawn from objective extra-mental reality, but they are said to be uniquely categories of finitude, and, consequently, they are not applicable to the transcendent. All of this must be kept in mind with the

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[13] ST I, p. 23. Cf. ST I, pp. 75-6.

[14] ST I, p. 76. "In receiving reasonably, the mind grasps its world; in reacting reasonably, the mind shapes its world." Ibid.

insistence of Tillich that his symbols are more than signs and are, in fact, analogous and truly participating in extra-mental reality.[15]

The function of the emotions. Although Tillich claims that philosophy and theology differ by reason of the fact that the former is objective and the latter is engaged, he does prevent any thinking, whether philosophical or theological, from being objective. Both his philosophy and his theology find their application of these a priori categories in an emotional experience. "Emotion is the vehicle for receiving cognition."[16] This emotional element, so essential to Tillich's symbols, shows how profoundly the romanticism of Schelling has influenced his thought. There is the communing with nature and the sympathy with its suffering. Tillich and an eminent psychologist were at the beach one day and saw a school of little fish pursued by larger ones; these were pursued in turn by even larger ones. "The scholar, who in many discussions, had defended the harmonious structure of reality, burst into tears, saying, 'Why are these beings created if they exist only to be swallowed by

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[15]"Ontological concepts are a priori in the strict sense of the word. They determine the nature of experience." ST I, p. 166.

[16]ST I, p. 98. "No union of subject and object is possible without emotional participation." Ibid.

others?'"[17] The encounter, therefore, of the structure of the mind with the logos-structure of reality is mediated by this most subjective element--emotion. This results in a knowledge that "is not theoretical; it is an existential truth that is a truth to which I cannot have the spectator-attitude, to which I must surrender in order to experience it. In this sense the symbols provide no objective knowledge."[18]

The importance of the collective unconscious. It is in this, the emotional encounter, that the Tillichian symbol is born. But it must be made clear, in order to further stress the subjectivity of this symbolism, that the symbol is not born from the encounter of the individual with extra-mental reality; it is born from the "collective unconscious, the great symbol-creating source . . ."[19] This dependence on the community saves the Tillichian symbol from an absolute individualism. It does not, however, save it from an essential subjectivity.[20] The purpose of symbolism should

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[17]SF, p. 83.

[18]Tillich, "Symbol and Knowledge: A Response," p. 204.

[19]ST I, p. 241.

[20]Thomistic analogy is based on an extra-mental reality that is analogous prior to the intellects finding it. The intellect in discovering the analogous reality attains an objective knowledge.

be to help the intellect, not to be a substitute for it, or be divorced from it as Tillich has done. Symbols do not simply come from the unconscious; there is an intellect that is behind them and sees their participation in reality. Tillich, however, since he denies the existence of the supernatural and, consequently, the existence of any real revelation, fails to distinguish between natural symbols and the revealed symbols. In the latter, there is the divine intellect that sees their objective participation in reality, even though that relationship may not always be evident to us. Rather than have the intellect, whether human or divine, opening up reality, Tillich has substituted courage. For him, courage does what the intellect does in Thomistic analogy.[21]

Relativism of Tillichian Symbolism

After this summary of those elements that place a radical subjectivism in the symbol, it is time to consider the relativism that is no less essential to Tillichian symbolism. This relativism results: first, from this very subjectivism to the symbol, and second, it results from the

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[21]It is courage that opens up reality, not the intellect. "Every act of courage is a manifestation of the ground of being." CB, p. 181. It is courage that is the key to an idea of God. "The courage to be in its radical form is a key to an idea of God which transcends both mysticism and the person-to-person encounter." CB, p. 178.

nature of extra-mental reality as Dr. Tillich sees it. This second element alone would be enough to distinguish symbolism from analogy. Even in God, Tillich asserts a change. "The nature of life is actualization, not actuality."[22] Obviously, if the truth of a symbol is going to be dependent on its relationship to God, there is introduced into the very heart of the symbol a necessary relativism. Thus, in Tillich, both objective reason and subjective reason change.[23] However, contrary to Dr. Tillich's position, there is not a metaphysics valid for the third century B.C. that is invalid for the twentieth century A.D.. Metaphysics, based on the nature of the intellect and the nature of external reality, does not vary.

The claim that symbols can die and have died for some is but an application of this relativism. It is, therefore, not inconceivable that the concrete element of all Christian symbols disappear. All reality is capable of being used as a symbol, yet in the very heart of reality there is this mutable truth.[24] Thus there is a certain mutual causality between these two elements: the subjective and the

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[23]"Human nature changes in history. Process philosophy is right in this." ST I, p. 167.

[24]"It is a problem whether one can speak about a changing element within the structure of reality. . . . Reality itself creates structural possibilities within itself. Life, as well as mind, is creative." ST I, p. 78.

relative in Tillichian symbolism. This relativism demands the subjective element to constitute the symbolic or pointing power of any facet of reality.

The Thomistic Notion of Analogy

This brief consideration of the notion of St. Thomas of analogy is to make clear how wide is the gap between analogy and symbolism.[25] The question is: how does analogy avoid both agnosticism and anthropomorphism?[26] How can one make a literal predication of God using concepts drawn from finite reality and still not be idolatrous?

The analogous term (be it existence or father) is predicated of many things following upon an aspect that is "simply different," though somewhat the same by cause of a bearing toward some one thing. An analogous term is between a univocal term and an equivocal term; but the important point is that in analogy our predication has a closer relationship to equivocity than to univocity. This fact needs to be stressed since it is precisely this characteristic of

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[25]For a full treatment of the Thomistic notion of analogy, consult the Protestant theologian, E. L. Mascall, Existence and Analogy (London: Longmans Green and Co., Ltd., 1949), and Abbé Penido, Le Rôle de l'Analogie en Théologie dogmatique (Paris: J. Vrin, 1931).

[26]Although analogy and symbolism have a wider application than to God, this is still their most important function. The comparison between analogy and symbolism will, therefore, be limited to their application to God.

Thomistic analogy that avoids anthropomorphism. The element of "simply different" in a description of the analogous term does not in any way compromise the divine transcendence. The other element in this description of an analogous term, "somewhat the same," avoids the danger of agnosticism and furnishes our intellect with a positive knowledge of God.[27] This reality (existence, life, fatherhood) is formally and properly in God. It is indeed necessary to distinguish between the perfection itself and the mode of signification of that perfection. The reality of any of the simple perfections (that is, those whose concept does not involve any necessary imperfections) belongs literally to God who is the cause and the sum of all of these perfections. Their mode of signification (that is, the existence, the paternity, the goodness) as they appear in finite reality does not belong properly and strictly to God in whom these perfections are found in an infinite degree.

This analogy of proper proportionality is something that exists outside the mind. These pure perfections (existence, life, goodness) realize themselves differently

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[27]There is a three-fold manner of predicating the analogous term: one can say that God is wise (via affirmationis); one can also say that God is not wise (via negationis) here we mean that God is not wise in the way that creatures are wise; and we can say that God is super-wise (via eminentia) that is, that wisdom in God is infinitely superior to the wisdom that is found in creatures.

in various beings according to various modes. These modes are immanent in this reality and are expressed confusedly by it. The intellect passes from one of these analogies to another, not by any addition of specific differences, but by making more explicit the diverse modalities already included in it. The foundation of this, therefore, is the essence of the being itself.[28] There is another type of analogy that complements the analogy of proper proportionality. This analogy concerns the term that is secundum intentionem but not secundum esse. This is the analogy of attribution. The analogous reality is realized intrinsically and formally only in the prime analogy, while the other analogies bear some relation to it. The classical example, found in both Aristotle and St. Thomas, is health--as predicated of many. Formally, health exists only in a living animal; non-living beings bear some relationship to health. They are the cause of health, or a sign of health, etc. Here there is a question not of a reality existing in each, but in a likeness that exists between them. The analogy of attribution

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[28]The analogy of proper proportionality is thus based on a perfection existing objectively and fulfilling three conditions: first, that it can be realized intrinsically in each analogy; second, that the realization takes place according to essentially diverse and graduated modes; third, that the realization be such that nothing in these modes is extrinsic to the analogical perfection in which they are united.

reaches God by means of the ladder of causality; here God is attained as the Supreme Cause of existence. We know something about the relationship of this cause, but nothing about the intrinsic nature of this cause. The analogy of attribution does not exclude the formal possession of the perfection by God, but it does not of itself necessarily ascribe it to him. It simply says that he is the cause of that perfection. The two analogies will consequently complement each other. In the analogy of proper proportionality there is a question of a similarity existing in the heart of the various analogues. This likeness expresses the likeness of the relations only proportionately, not univocally (creature : its nature :: God : his being). This analogy, as we have seen, is based on an objective fact: the gradations of being, of life, etc. It is not known, however, how this perfection is realized in God. It is the analogy of attribution that brings the two sides of the proportion together. The analogy of proper proportionality allows us to do more than virtually predicate something of God; the analogy of attribution avoids agnosticism, for it leads us to the existing First Cause of being.

In addition to the analogy of proper proportionality there is the analogy of improper proportionality, that is, the metaphor. One finds this rich metaphorical imagery in

the Bible.[29] This language of the metaphor is common to the poet and to the mystic. Here there is no question of predicating anything formally in God.[30] Tillichian symbolism seems to approach this and, yet, because of its excessive stress on the subjective to the exclusion of the intellect, does not attain the richness of the Scriptural symbol. There is an emotional power to a symbol and to a metaphor that enriches one's realization of those analogous concepts of the simple perfections. As symbols, "shepherd" and

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[29]God is called the "Light" (John, 1:5), the "Living Water" (John, 7:38), "Consuming Fire" (Heb. 12:29), the "Rock" (2 Sam. 22:2).

[30]Symbol and metaphor have much in common; both are indirect in their approach to God. Neither concerns a perfection formally in God; both involve the sensible and are concerned with mixed perfections, that is, a perfection whose concept contains, of its very nature, a limitation. If there is a distinction between the two (namely, symbol and metaphor) it is due in part to the emphasis given in the role played by the sensible. When one uses a symbol it is a question of an intellect, human or divine, starting with an idea and using some facet of created reality to symbolize that idea. Such is the case with water: a symbol in the Sacrament of Baptism; such, too, is the case with the symbol of the "shepherd" or the "spouse." In symbolism, the intellect is primary; the idea is primary; it is directive. Tillichian symbolism, however, lacks this intellectual element. Symbols do give an objective knowledge, although indirectly. They have an inner power and a participation in material reality. This is especially true in divinely revealed symbols. The metaphor seems to result more from the shock of the sensible on the intellect; the intellect is forced to give expression to this experience. Here the intellect does play its part; for that part follows the impact or shock of a sensible reality. That shock can be the sound of music, the beauty of a sunset, the power of the ocean.

"bridegroom" applied to God add warmth to the concept of the Divine Goodness and the Divine Love. Those symbols can therefore help man--composite creature that he is, of spirit and matter--to better grasp the meaning of the Divine Name. These metaphors, however, can never be substituted for the Divine Name, known either by reason or revelation. The language of God that is uniquely symbolic or metaphorical (and Tillich's never exceeds that) results in agnosticism. Neither must man's knowledge of God be limited merely to the conceptual level. The symbol and the metaphor have an essential place, as Dr. Tillich asserts, in religion. There are depths of reality that the poet and the mystic plumb by means of their symbols.

Since Dr. Tillich denies divine revelation, he does not take into account the fact that the Divine Intellect is behind the divinely revealed symbols and divinely revealed analogies. "No one has ever seen God; the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has revealed him."[31] "We speak of that which we know and we attest that which we have seen."[32] There is a question here of seeing from the inside; this is divine revelation. How different are our abstractions that rise to a knowledge of God from this

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[31]John 1:18.

[32]John 3:10.

"inside view" of Jesus. God contemplating the richness of his own interior life can see that there is something in created reality that bears resemblance to the Divine Life and he can reveal that resemblance. Because Jesus is the only-begotten Son from all eternity, he knows that God is Father. Fatherhood, therefore, is much more than a mere symbol or metaphor. It is to be taken in its proper sense. Arianism was the attempt to make this a metaphor. The father symbol in Systematic Theology does not exceed the metaphor of Arianism.

This analogous predication of St. Thomas implies a literal predication. Any literal predication is regarded by Tillich as a form of idolatry. For Tillich this seems to imply that God is grasped by man; such, however, is in no way the intention of Thomistic analogy. The analogous concepts never exhaust the divine knowability; they can never be said to limit God and imprison him. The analogous concept asserts more than it sees contained in the concept. The reason for this is that truth is not found in the concept, but it is found in our judgment which goes beyond the order of concept.[33] Our judgment carries us beyond our

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33Gilson says: "People thus come . . . step by step to speak of analogy as a source of almost positive knowledge which would allow us to conceive more or less confusedly the essence of God. But perhaps . . . it is not necessary to force the Thomist texts in order to obtain from this notion

concepts to a term which we do not see, yet can affirm with certainty. Here in the analogous predication there is no claim to conceptualize God's essence. We have no concept of existence. However, what we say about God is true, even though the divine reality infinitely outstrips what is revealed to us in our analogous concept. The Thomistic predication of these concepts is not simply secundum intentionem but secundum esse, and in God they are found infinitely. We do not go beyond the reality expressed by these concepts, but we go beyond the imperfect and fragmentary manner of expression in creative existence. God is greater than anything we can say about him, but what we do say about him (if there is question of a simple perfection) is true. Although the light of the human intellect is feeble, there is a light. The fact that the mystic experience is a richer light does not deprive conceptual knowledge of value. The principal objection to Tillichian symbolism is that it denies all conceptual knowledge of God.

Theological Symbols

In addition to this criticism of Tillichian symbolism

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the services desired. It is enough to interpret them, as St. Thomas does himself, not in the order of the concept but in that of the judgment." E. Gilson, Le Thomisme. Introduction à la philosophie de saint Thomas d'Aquin (fifth edition; Paris: J. Vrin, 1948), p. 153, cited by Mascall, Existence and Analogy, op. cit., p. 117.

and its relationship to Thomistic analogy, there are other aspects of symbolism, particularly related to the theological symbols that deserve a comment. Here, however, the principle of criticism will be not only the philosophical but the theological, that is, it will endeavor to point out the incompatibility of these theological symbols and their underlying principles with the data of revelation.

What we have seen so far of Tillichian metaphysics makes it clear why experience is the only possible way that Tillich admits of reaching God. Neither reason nor revelation denies the possibility of this experience.[34] In fact, many passages of the Scriptures: the visions of Jeremiah, or of Isaiah, bring out that passive aspect of revelation that makes one think of Tillich's ecstatic reason. The criticism of Tillich's experience of God is based not on the denial of the possibility of such an experience of the divine, but on the claim that this is the only possible way of attaining to a knowledge of God.[35] This claim is

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[34]St. Thomas experienced something at Naples on December 6, 1273, that prevented him from any further writings. His Summa was "as straw". There is no doubt, therefore, that genuine mystical experience is richer than conceptual knowledge.

[35]Father Louis Bouyer makes the following observation that is confirmed by Tillich's position. Father writes of the paradox of the Reformation that had "begun to exalt the sovereignty of God, arrived at an immanentism absolutely closed to all the transcendent . . . begun to establish . . . the divine authority of Scripture, ended by reducing it to a

contrary to the data of revelation. One has only to refer to the epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. In his first and second chapters, St. Paul teaches that man can attain, without revelation, the knowledge of God. "From the foundations of the world men have caught sight of his invisible nature, his eternal power and his divineness, as they are known through his creatures."[36] This Tillich finds unacceptable, because he says that it makes God an object of knowledge, whereas he is, in fact, a subject even if he becomes a logical object. In this there is a certain truth, but one must distinguish between the causality of the First Cause and that of the second cause. Man, in his knowledge as well as in all of his activities, remains a second cause. Nevertheless, the fact is that he is a true cause, and he really knows.

One looks in vain for any meaningful reference to God as Father, which is certainly the idea of God most characteristic of the New Testament revelation.[37] Instead, God is

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purely human document and by denying even the possibility of revelation." Louis Bouyer, The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism, (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1956), p. 194.

[36]Romans, 1:20.

[37]It is curious that an existentialist theologian such as Tillich refuses to find meaning in the revealed name of God: I am, Who am.

not even considered as a person, much less three Divine Persons. Tillich substitutes such vague names as "Ground of Being" and "Power of Being." In discussing the attempts to modernize God linguistically, as Tillich is certainly doing, Rosalind Murray aptly points out:

> An indeterminate "force for good," an "emanation of our higher selves," the "great mathematical mind," the "movement of integration," "metabiology," to use but a few of the synonyms which are supposed to clarify and improve our idea of God, cannot inspire us with real devotion. It is possible to imagine acceptance of these concepts in so far as the words make any sense at all, but it is utterly impossible for such acceptance to play an active part in human life.[38]

That the Tillichian terms do not play the part in human life that the Fatherhood of God plays in the New Testament, or the transcendent holiness of God plays in the Old Testament is evident from Tillich's exclusion of prayer and sacrifice from religion. These expressions of the religious attitude toward God are found both in natural religion and especially in the revealed religion of the Old and the New Testament. It is through prayer and sacrifice that man best acknowledges the transcendence of God and not in their rejection. These Tillichian attitudes toward prayer and sacrifice are a logical consequence of his theological symbols and constitute a sufficient reason for rejecting them.

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[38]Rosalind Murray, The Good Pagans Failure (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1948), p. 101.

Original Sin

Although Tillich's description of sin as estrangement between God and man contains an element of truth, the fact is that his description is incomplete; it rests on the phenomenological level. Never does it go beyond the diagnosis of a psychologist. One looks in vain for the necessary distinction between the evil that is sin and the evil that is finitude. In Tillich they are identified. The Creation and the Fall are one and the same reality. From the beginning, human existence is a fallen existence in Tillichian theology; and it ever remains a fallen existence. This is clear from the fact that justification does not bring about any intrinsic change in man's fallen existence, neither does Tillich express any hope of a personal immortality which would, therefore, be the basis of a hope--of a future transformation. Finite existence is always a fallen existence. The question that Dr. Tillich fails to answer is: what goodness does a creature ever have?

There seems no more valid criticism of this original sin symbol than to point out its contradiction of the divine transcendence. The power, the liberty, the goodness of the God of Abraham are all compromised by this identification of the Fall and Creation. From the beginning, the work of Creation is a faulty work and, despite what Dr. Tillich says to the contrary, the fault is entirely God's. There is no

real Adam; there is no real choice. The historical value of Genesis has been completely rejected.

Since this position identifies finite existence and sin, it does not seem that human existence can ever have any value. This Platonic myth of original sin will make impossible any meaningful redemption. The idea would seem to be to go out of existence and to return to the state of "dreaming innocence."

Since finite existence is identified with fallen existence, Dr. Tillich does not make clear why the New Being is not also fallen being. In other words, what is the principle that justifies Dr. Tillich's assertion that in "the Christ" existence is good, but in the rest of creation it is evil?

Christological Symbols

The comparison of the Tillichian christological symbols with the teaching of the New Testament and tradition shows that the philosophical system used in the method of correlation has deformed the kerygma. In systematic theology what is left of the traditional teaching of Christ is, at best, some sort of Docetism. There is no real Incarnation, no Word made Flesh. Once again, the dichotomy between technical reason and ecstatic reason makes impossible any resemblance between Jesus whom Peter called the Christ and the New Being of Tillich. This is the reason why, in the

writings of Paul Tillich, one never finds the expression: Jesus Christ; it is always: Jesus who is the Christ. The importance of Jesus is minimized. Should historical science someday succeed in proving that Jesus of Nazareth never existed, the Tillichian Christ would remain vigorous. This does not prevent Tillich from asserting that Christ is the center of history; that the Christ is the final revelation. When Tillich speaks of the superiority of Christianity, it is because Christianity is not just a cosmic myth; it is an historical myth.

Yet it is not easy to see what real meaning this can have if Christ is made so independent of Jesus as to be able to exist as a meaningful religious symbol even though Jesus never existed. It is one thing to say that your symbols participate in extra-mental reality and another thing to make impossible a realization of that participation. This is precisely what Tillich does in divorcing Christ from his intellect and relating Christ uniquely to a subjective experience of his will.[39] The concrete elements of the christological symbols could disappear, but the part of the symbol

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[39]Perhaps the remarks just made concerning the christological symbols will give us some understanding of why certain of Dr. Tillich's Protestant critics have accused him of atheism. If the christological symbols can exist despite the proven non-existence of Jesus, what is to prevent the theological symbols of Tillich from being a creation of his own will, completely unrelated to an objective transcendent.

related to ecstatic reason, that is, the New Being, would still remain.

Tillich makes much of the fact that our witnesses were themselves believers. From this fact he concludes that the Christ of faith cannot be touched by an attack on the Jesus of history. Once again the philosophy of Dr. Tillich makes impossible the acceptance of the data of revelation contained in the Bible. That the New Testament writers were witnesses of the faith is true. They were also (and this Tillich fails to mention) witnesses who appealed to the historical value of their statements. They intend to write historical facts. They are aware of it; their faith is in vain if these historical facts are not certain. This is, for example, the argument of St. Paul to the Corinthians. Paul and the Evangelists, like Tillich, would have found meaningless a faith that was Christo-centric without being, at the same time, Jesu-centric. Their faith would have been impossible apart from a moral certitude concerning the historical facts of the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

One finds it hard to understand how Tillich can at one time claim that the knowledge of the christological symbols is mediated through the events of history and yet remain so unconcerned when the historicity of those events is challenged. It becomes evident that Christ is not the light of the Tillichian intellect. At the conclusion of a

study of the christological symbols in Systematic Theology, one asks: "Where have they taken my Lord?".

Dr. Tillich, despite the fact that his symbolism has failed to accomplish its purpose, cannot but have a salutary effect in stimulating Protestant theology to realize the importance of the problem; and, perhaps, will even lead Protestant theologians to an appreciation of analogy--an appreciation such as that of E. L. Mascall.

Catholic theologians, too, can find stimulation in systematic theology to deepen their own notions of the nature and the functions of the symbol in theology.

The Protestant Principle

In addition to these errors in Tillichian symbolism, there are certain very basic attitudes that underlie his entire philosophy, that not only deprive it of all supernatural content, but make impossible such a content.

So far this critique started by criticizing the philosophical principles of systematic theology or by pointing out how Tillichian theology denies the data of revelation. But now there will be an attempt to point out that there are certain contradictions within Dr. Tillich's own theological position.

The Protestant principle is the warp and woof of Professor Tillich's thought. Without this principle, his

symbolism would be deprived of all support. Although its aim is the defense of the transcendence of God, it is used in such a way that the transcendence of God is denied. The Tillichian denial of an ecclesiastical authority, of unchangeable religious truths, of any divine communication of information to man, of the internal life of grace are applications of this Protestant principle. In a word, the created is said to be incapable of participating in the divine. The denial is not limited to the question of the facts of any of these realities; the denial goes further and denies their very possibility. In the very name of the Transcendent, Tillich has limited the liberty and the power of God.

There are certain things that God cannot do: He cannot become man; he cannot enlighten man's ignorance by teaching him truths; he cannot communicate his own authority; he cannot allow created reality to participate in his own causality. Thus the very notion of the transcendence of God undergoes a radical interpretation in Tillichian theology, one that is certainly foreign to the data of revelation.

The Method of Correlation

There is, likewise, in the method of correlation an implicit limitation of God's transcendence. No answer is acceptable unless the question has been asked. There is the supposition that without divine aid a man is capable of asking all the questions corresponding to the answers of the

divine kerygma. The fact is that God does give us the questions. There are certain truths, for example, the trinitarian dogma revealed by Jesus Christ, that the human intellect, unaided, could never seek for by asking a question. The infiniteness of the Transcendent demands this. These answers are simply given to us by the infinite God who prepares our minds to receive them.

Furthermore, the very questions of Tillichian philosophy limit the Jewish and the Christian kerygma. This philosophy, because of its prejudice to certain possible answers, refuses to ask all the right questions. Thus, it limits the very structure of being. According to Tillich, the method of correlation is dialectical; the answer can never be a certain truth. It is ever a Yes and a No that demands a decision and a venture. The dialectical nature of Tillichian philosophy deforms the kerygma of revelation. In order to be conformable to the data of revelation, the method of correlation would demand that the religious symbol and the thing symbolized, both be immutable. There is, however, in the Tillichian method of correlation that essential relativism that has already been pointed out, which makes immutable truth unacceptable and impossible. In systematic theology, both the Logos and the Theos change.[40]

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[40]Cf. ST I, pp. 246-248, and ST II, pp. 22-3.

The method of correlation involves the relationship of reason to revelation.[41] Reason places the questions and revelation gives the answers. One would expect, however, that the method of correlation--if there is to be a correlation--would demand that question and answer be of the same nature. Yet in Tillichian theology, the question is conceptual and the answer is exclusively a-conceptual. Not only is the Tillichian answer a-conceptual to the question in the conceptual order, but the faculty asking the question is never answered. Question and answer, to be faithful to a method of correlation, should be in the same faculty. Technical reason has placed the question and it ever remains in darkness. Revelation, although it is supposed to heal reason, never touches reason.

This criticism of Dr. Tillich's position concludes with Augustine's remarks concerning the Gnostic adversaries:

> 'Let those be angry with you . . . who do not know with how great toil truth is attained, or how difficult it is to avoid mistakes. Let those be angry with you who do not know how rare a thing it is, and how hard a thing, to be free from the phantasies which arise within us. Let those be angry with you who know not how painful is the healing of the inner eye of man if it is to behold its true Sun--not the image of the Sun in the sky which you know, but the Sun of which it is written, "The Sun of Righteousness is risen upon me," and of which the

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[41]The inability of the intellect to answer its own questions is due to the Fall, according to Tillich. Yet, what justifies Tillich's confidence in the intellect to even ask the right questions?

Gospel says, "This was the true Light that enlighteneth every man that comes into this world." Let those be angry with you who do not know what sighs and tears are needed if the real God is to be known--even in the tiniest degree. . . .

'But in order that neither may you be angry with me . . . I must beg this one favour of you. Let us, on both sides, lay aside all arrogance. Let us not, on either side, claim that we have already discovered the truth. Let us seek it together as something which is known to neither of us. For then only may we seek it, lovingly and tranquilly, if there be no bold presumption that it is already discovered and possessed. . . .'[42]

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[42]St. Augustine, Contra Epistolam Manichaei, cap. 3, cited by Victor White, O. P., God and the Unconscious (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1953), p. 214.

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ERRATA CORRIGENDA

Page 16, line 5 -- should read "his system" instead of "a system."

Page 53, third line from bottom -- "crisis" instead of "crises."

Page 65, sixth line from bottom -- "preparatory" instead of "prefatory."

Page 74, footnote -- should read "excessive supranaturalism" instead of "excessive naturalism."

Page 288, line 17 -- "compromised" instead of "a compromise."

Page 290, line 3 -- "subjective" instead of "objective."

Page 290, line 13 -- "subjectivism" instead of "objectivism."

Page 295, footnote -- "behind" instead of "beyond."

Page 296, line 17 -- "only not drawn" instead of 'bnly drawn."

Page 299, last line -- "of the symbol" instead of "to the symbol."

Page 303, line 3 -- "analogues" instead of "analogies."

Page 303, line 12 -- "prime analogue" instead of "prime analogy."

Page 303, line 12 -- "analogues" instead of "analogies."

Page 303, footnote -- "each analogue" instead of "each analogy."

Page 304, line 13 -- "being" instead of "nature."

Page 313, line 6 -- "ideal" instead of "idea."